

UNIT A

Allah Controls the World

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UNIT

A

CHAPTER

ONE

Allah Controls the World

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Understand the concept of Al-Qadar in Islam.
- 2 Internalize that nothing happens in the universe without Allah's permission and knowledge.
- 3 Understand that man has free will to choose good or evil actions.

VOCABULARY

Al-Qadar (Divine fate) القدر

Al-Ilm (The knowledge) العلم

Kitabah (Written destiny) الكتابة

Mashee'ah (Divine will) المشيئة

Al-Khalq (The creation) الخلق

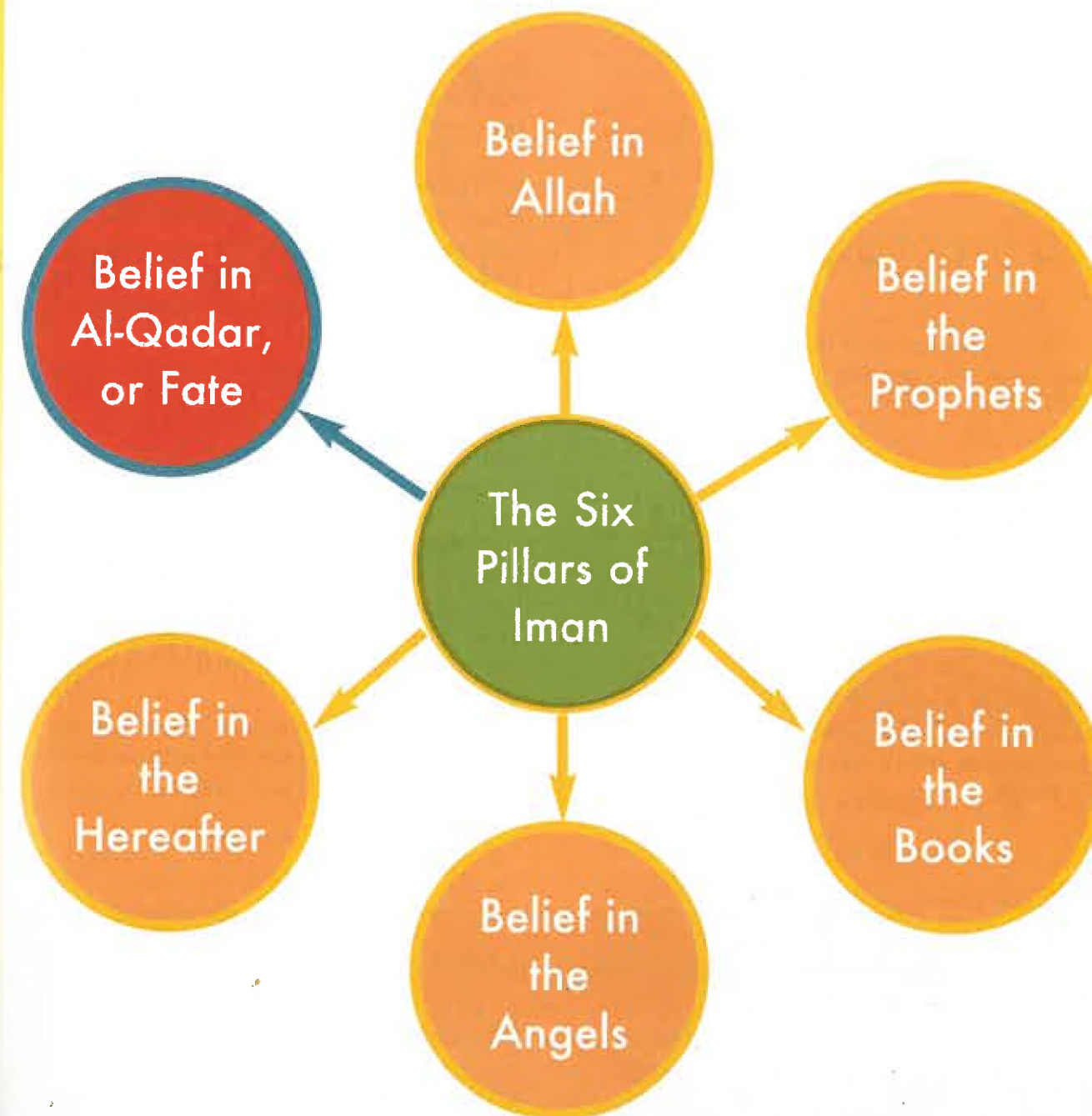


The Belief In Al-Qadar

As you learned in your elementary years, there are six pillars of i-man (faith). These pillars are to believe in Allah, His angels, His messengers, His books, the Day of Judgment, and to believe in Al-Qadar (divine fate).

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Pillars of Faith



In this unit, you will have ample opportunity to learn about the sixth pillar of faith: the belief in Al-Qadar.

The universe is Allah's property and nothing happens in His Kingdom without His knowledge and permission. The Arabic term for Divine fate or destiny is Al-Qadar. Everything in the world has a predetermined

and set course. The destiny of every element of creation and the outcome of every situation, whether major or minor, is already known to Allah.

The original meaning of the word Al-Qadar is "exact measure" or amount. The Arabic verb "yuqaddir" means, among other things, to measure or decide the quantity,

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quality, or position of something before you actually make it.

There are many references to Al-Qadar in the Holy Qur'an. Allah says:

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ۝٤٩﴾

Verily, We have created all things with Qadar. (54:49)

﴿وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقْدَرَهُ نَقْدِيرًا ۝٢﴾

He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measure. (25:2)

﴿أَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُمْ مِنْ مَّاءٍ مَهِينٍ ۝٢٠ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ۝٢١ إِلَىٰ قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ۝٢٢ فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ ۝٢٣﴾

Did we not create you with a fluid of no value? Then We placed it in a place of safety (womb), for a known period? So We did measure, and We are the best to measure. (77:20-23)

- 1 Al-Ilm العلم Divine Knowledge: Allah first knows what will happen.
- 2 Al-Kitabah الكتابة Written Destiny: The angels write what will happen.
- 3 Al-Mash'eeah المشيئة Divine Will: Allah wills and permits what is written to happen when its time comes.
- 4 Al-Khalq الخلق Creation: Allah creates and makes his will happen in the real world.

﴿قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝٥١﴾

Say: "Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Lord and Protector. And in Allah let the believers put their trust." (9:51)

The belief in Al-Qadar is one of the six pillars of faith in Islam. In a famous hadeeth of Jibreel, we understand the true meaning of faith. "Now tell me about iman," the Angel Jibreel once said to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The Prophet replied, "It means that you should believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day; and that you should believe in fate, both good and evil."

Scholars have defined Al-Qadar as "that [which] Allah has ordained and permitted, both good and evil, before creating His creation, and that all what has happened and will happen are through Allah's knowledge and will."

Scholars of Islam also say that there are four aspects of Al-Qadar that help us understand how Al-Qadar happens in our world:

Let us learn in some details of the above aspects of Al-Qadar:

1. Al-Ilm

Knowledge - A Muslim believes that Allah has full knowledge of everything in the universe, whether major or minor. This amazing knowledge encompasses all the actions of Allah and the actions of all His creation. Allah says:

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَىٰ اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ۝٧٠﴾

Didn't you know that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Surely this is in a book; surely this is easy to Allah. [22:70]

2. Kitabah

Written Destiny - A Muslim believes that Allah recorded everything in a Book that was kept with Him in Heavens. This Book is called "Al-Lawh-ul-Mah'foodh," The Preserved Book. Allah says in Surat-ul-An'aam,

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنَ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظُلْمَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَابِسٌ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ۝٦١﴾

And with Him are the keys of (all that is hidden); none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the Earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but he knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the Earth, nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a clear record. (6:59)

Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-Aas رضي الله عنه said that he heard Prophet Muhammad ﷺ say, "Allah recorded the measurement of all matters pertaining to Creation fifty thousand years before He created the Heavens and Earth." [Reported by Imam Muslim]

3. Mashee'ah

Divine Will- Mashee'ah is the belief that nothing, whether related to Allah's actions or actions taken by His slaves, can happen without His permission. Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۝٢٨﴾

And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses. (28: 68)

﴿وَفِعْلُ اللَّهِ مَا يَشَاءُ ۝٢٧﴾

And Allah does what He wills. (14: 27)

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝٦١﴾

He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. (3:6)

4. Al-Khalq

The Creation - The final aspect of Al-Qadar is the belief that Allah is the sole creator of all creation and that He endowed us with our attributes and all our actions. Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿اللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ۝٦٢﴾

Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian over all things. (39:62)

﴿وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقْدَرَهُ نَقْدِيرًا ۝٢﴾

He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements. (25: 2)

Also, Prophet Ibraheem said to his people, as mentioned in the Qur'an,

﴿وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝٦٦﴾

"And Allah has created you and what you make." (37:96)

Aspects of Al-Qadar



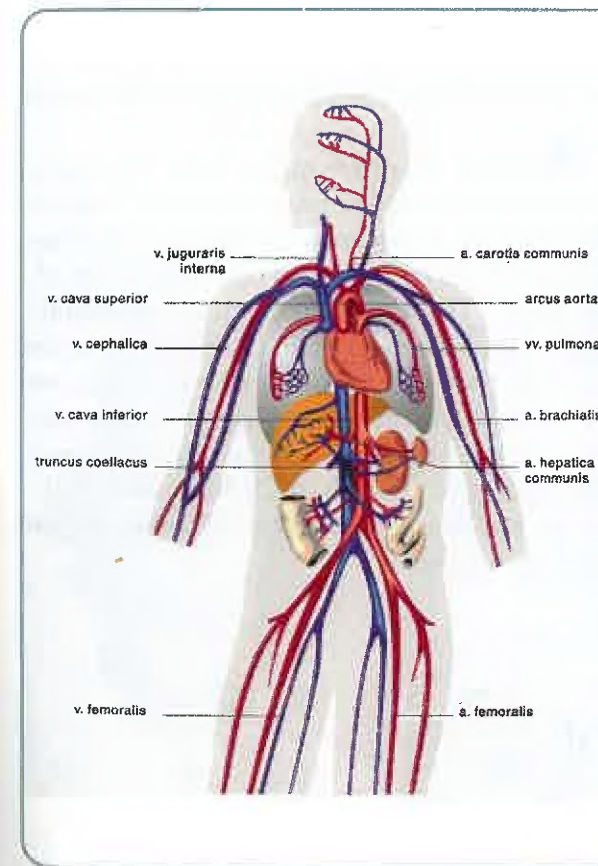
Do we have free will?

Some people think that since Allah controls our lives and decides everything that happens in the world, we do not have free will or any control over our actions. This is far from the truth. The belief in Al-Qadar does not mean that we are passive individuals who have no part to play in our lives. Al-Qadar does not prevent a person from exercising free will to choose a course of action.

Allah does not force people to do anything. He only encourages His servants to do the good and avoid the bad. It is entirely up to the individual as to whether he or she chooses to obey or disobey. Allah gave man free will to choose his actions, whether good or evil.

To make things more understandable, human actions can be categorized into three types:

1. Actions within you (blood circulation, heart beats, etc.)
2. Actions upon you (weather, accidents, environment, attacks, etc.)
3. Actions from you (praying, helping others, harming others, etc.)



While man cannot fully control the actions within him or upon him, he still can control the actions that come out of him. God gave humans the brain and other faculties to choose their actions and decide to do good or evil. Therefore, man has free will when it comes to the actions that come out of him, thus he is responsible for these actions. On the other hand, he has no control over those actions that happen within him or upon him, therefore, he is not responsible for these actions. Only Allah controls these types of actions.

Indeed, Allah has given us ample information through His prophets and messengers to guide us to lead good obedient lives. The responsibility now lies within each individual to make the right choices. Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ
فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

Messengers give good news and warnings to mankind. Those who believe and mend their ways will have nothing to fear nor regret. But those who deny Allah's revelations will be punished for their sins. [Surat-ul-Anaam 6:48-49]

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ مَآبًا ﴿٣١﴾﴾

So, whosoever wills, let him take a return to his Lord [by obeying His commandments. [Surat-un-Naba' 78:39]

However, Allah knows the choices we will make even before we decide. We do not know what our destiny is, but surely Allah knows the fate of all things.

Of course, one might ask: "What can man do, if Allah has already decreed for him to go astray with no possibility of guidance?" The answer to this question is that Allah guides whoever sincerely wants guidance and leads astray whoever deliberately and continuously chooses to disobey. Allah says in Surat-us-Saff

﴿فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥﴾﴾

Then when they deviated [on their own], Allah let their hearts go wrong. For Allah guides not those who are rebellious transgressors. [Surat-us-Saff 61: 5]

Therefore, Allah, in His infinite wisdom, wills guidance to the one He knows is seeking the truth and striving toward the right path. On the other hand, Allah prescribes misguidance to the one who insists to remain disobedient and deviant even after he knows the truth.

Of course there are many things that occur in life over which one has no control. Natural disasters like hurricanes or afflictions such as serious illness or death are completely out of our hands. Those with firm faith understand that whatever befalls them in this life is according to the will of Allah, and it only occurs with His full knowledge. When things that we do not understand happen, as true Muslims, we must trust that Allah has wisdom behind all things, and therefore we should accept the outcome as Al-Qadar.

The Benefits of the Belief in al-Qadar

There are many great benefits of the belief in Al-Qadar that one cannot count. These benefits have profound effects on man's personality and behavior. Here are some important benefits of the belief in Al-Qadar.

1. Believers in al-Qadar Receive Allah's Mercy. This mercy is bestowed upon them because they turn to Allah alone during any calamity. Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ
وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ
وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ
مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾
أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ
وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾﴾

Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere. (They are those) who, when afflicted with calamity, say: 'Truly! to Allah we belong and truly, to Him shall we return'. They are those on whom are the blessings from their God, and (they are those) who receive His mercy; and it is they who are the guided ones. [Surat-ul-Baqarah 2:155-157]

2. Believing in Al-Qadar teaches acceptance of pains and courage in times of calamity. All incidents that happen to a person are a result of Allah's Qadar. One should accept the will of Allah when harm happens to us and we could not protect ourselves from it. All this takes place according to the Qadar of Allah. Let us learn this important hadeeth:

Hadeeth Shareef

عن صهيب الرومي رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله ﷺ :
"عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ ، إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ."
رواه مسلم

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "The attitude of the believer is amazing. All of his matters are righteous. This is only for the believer. If a joy is brought to him, he thanks (Allah for it). This is better for him. If a calamity befalls him, he is patient. This is also good for him."

[Reported by Imam Muslim]

3. The Belief in Al-Qadar Teaches

Contentment. Many times a person finds it difficult to miss what he likes, or to accept what he dislikes. We sometimes feel miserable for losing or not gaining what we like to have. Allah sometimes chooses for us what we dislike, because he knows that it is good for us in the future. Similarly, he may prevent us from getting what we like because it will be bad for us in the future. Therefore, when we believe in this, we put our full trust in Allah and accept the hardships or inconveniences we face in this life. In the beginning, we may feel disheartened and sad; however it is only a matter of time before we realize that what we considered bad was actually good for us in this life, or in the next. Allah says:

You may like something but it is actually bad for you, and you may dislike something else but it is actually good for you.

4. The Belief in Al-Qadar Encourages

Generosity. A Muslim understands that financial status is decided by Allah. The believer knows that Allah loves charity and He gives back to the generous giver more than what he or she has given to the needy. Therefore, one cannot feel that giving in charity will reduce one's wealth.



5. The Belief in Al-Qadar Protects the Believers from Social Diseases.

Envy and jealousy are social diseases that will be in check. The believer knows that it is by Allah's will that people have or do not have wealth, possessions, children, etc. Surely the one who is envious of others is indeed objecting to Allah's decree, or Al-Qadar.

6. The Belief in Al-Qadar Saves the Person from Dealing with Magic, Soothsayers, Fortune-tellers, etc.

Believers realize that Allah alone is the true helper to mankind. They believe everyone other than Allah cannot benefit anyone on their own without the will and permission of Allah. Therefore, witchcrafters, fortune-tellers and all other people have no true effects on man's life.

7. The Belief in Al-Qadar Teaches

Humility. When a believer succeeds in education, the workplace, or gains wealth, he humbles himself and becomes thankful to Allah for the favors He has bestowed upon him or her. All successes happen because of Allah's favor and help. Therefore, becoming proud and boastful when you succeed in achieving a high grade or good deed makes one forget to thank Allah for permitting and helping him to successfully perform this achievement.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

Select a story from the Qur'an on Al-Qadar.



Stretch Your Mind

Imagine someone approaches you claiming that man has no free will. "If God has already ordained what I will do, I have no free will," he claims. "God has already chosen my path." How would you respond? Write a convincing answer to this man's claim that man has no free will.



Study Questions

- 1 What is Al-Qadar?
- 2 What are the main aspects of Al-Qadar? Define each of them.
- 3 Does man have free will to choose good or evil actions? Support your answer with an ayah and logical evidence.
- 4 What actions do humans have free will to control over? List three examples.
- 5 What actions we do not have free will to control over? List three examples.
- 6 Outline at least five benefits of the belief in Al-Qadar.

UNIT

A

CHAPTER

TWO

Only Allah Gives Life and Death

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Believe that only Allah gives life and death.
- 2 Understand how the belief in Al-Qadar treats people from the fear of death.
- 3 Learn when human life starts in the womb according to Islam and medicine.
- 4 Learn when human life ends according to Islam and medicine.
- 5 Memorize and understand the names of Allah that relate to giving and taking human life.
- 6 Memorize and understand the Hadeeth on the stages of human life in the womb.

VOCABULARY

Hayah حياة

Mawt موت

Ajal أجل

Life and death are two unavoidable and fascinating topics. They have continuously mystified and puzzled people throughout the ages. Scholars and philosophers have tried to find answers to age-old questions like: "What is life?"; "How did life come into being?"; and "When did life begin?" They also search for answers to questions such as "What is death?" and "How does it occur?"

People of all religions, and even those without faith, understand that death will come to everyone at some point in time. Allah has mentioned life and death many times in the Qur'an. To believe that Allah alone is the One who gives life and takes it away through death is an important element of the belief in Al-Qadar in Islam.

All the verses in the Qur'an confirm that

Allah is the only one who gives life and takes it away. Allah says in Surat Al-Waqi'ah:

﴿ نَحْنُ قَدَرْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ ﴾

"We have decreed death among you." [Surat-ul-Waqi'ah 56: 60]

Allah also says in Surat Ghafir,

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴾

Lessons on Life and Death

The Qur'an and Sunnah provide us with the following lessons about life and death:

1. Allah created life and death to test mankind. He wants us to prove whether we commit good or bad deeds. Allah says in Surat Al-Mulk,

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَفُورُ ﴾

"He is the One Who created life and death to test which of you is best in deeds." [67: 2] Life is given to man kind only for the purpose of worshipping Allah, our Creator.

2. Death is a definite end to every created being; no one is immortal except Allah. Allah (S.W.T.) says in Surat-ur-Rahman,

﴿ كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَسَبَقَنِي وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴾

"Whatsoever is on it (the Earth) will perish. And the face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honor will abide forever." [55: 26-27]

"He it is Who gives life and causes death. And when He decides upon a thing He only says to it: 'Be!' And it is." [Surat-ul-Ankabut 40:68]

In another verse, Allah (S.W.T.) says in Surat Qaaf,

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ ﴾

"Verily, We give life and cause death; and to Us is the final return." [50: 43]

He also says in surat-ul-Ankabut:

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴾

Every soul will taste death, and you all will return to Us [29: 57]

In an authentic hadeeth, reported by Imam At-Tabarani and Al-Hakem the prophet ﷺ said: "Jibreel came to me and said: Oh Muhammad, live as much as you want, you will die, and love whomever you want, you will part with them"

3. Death occurs at a specific time and in a specific place. It does not change or happen before it is due or after it is due. Allah (S.W.T.) says in Surat-ul-A'raf,

﴿ وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴾

"When their term is reached, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment)." [7:34]

Selected Story

Imam Muslim reported that Umu-Habeebah, the Prophet's wife said, "Oh Allah, make the lives of my husband (the Prophet), my father (Abu Sufyan), and my brother (Mu'awiah) long."

"You have asked Allah to change a previously dictated end and a defined number of days, (things that are already dictated)," replied the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. "Allah will not hasten anything before its time, and He will not put off anything after its time. If you had asked Allah to shelter you from Hell-fire and protect you from the punishment of the grave, it would have been better," the Prophet concluded.

How the Belief in Al-Qadar Treats Fear of Death?

Islam treats fear of death and teaches us to get ready for it and to prepare for the Day of Judgment. What is important is that everyone should think about what they want from this life. Do they want to abandon the duties of belief and to worry only about this worldly life? Or do they want to look and work for the Hereafter? Allah says in Surat Al-Imran:

"And whoever desires a reward in (this) world, We shall give him of it: And whoever desires a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give him of it." [3:145]

How different is this life from the hereafter, and how different is the interest in this life from the interest in the hereafter? Whoever wants to live for this life alone, he would live as animals, and then he will die at his dictated time without delay. And whoever longs and yearns for the Hereafter, he will live the life of a man honored by Allah, following Allah's rules. He too shall die at his dictated time.

Allah alone gives life and He alone brings it back at a specific time. This applies to the people who are sitting at home and among their families or the people who are protecting themselves inside a castle and the people who are fighting in the battle. Time of death has nothing to do with war or peace, and it has nothing to do with how protected the place is. Death comes when it is time. Allah says in Surat-un-Nisaa':

"Where so ever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!" [4: 78].

He also says in Surat Al-Imran, Say (O Muhammad): Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death." [3:154]

Since it is not known when death will come, if someone wants to die as a Muslim, he should be a Muslim from this moment without delay and every moment without exception. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran:

"O you who believe, obtain taqwa of Allah as should be, and do not die except in a state of Islam." [3:102]

The Prophet ﷺ said in a hadeeth reported by Imam Ibn-Hibban and Al-Bazzar: "Remember often the one that defeats all joys: death. Indeed whoever remembers it in time of hardship, it will alleviate it; and whoever remembers it in good times, it will make them less so."

Allah emphasizes in the Qur'an the importance of striving to lead noble and good lives. It has also been made clear to us the reward or punishment we would expect according to the lives we lead. Allah, the Merciful, has also provided us roles, responsibilities, and a way of life outlined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. If we follow Allah's guidance, He will help us to live in a righteous way leading to the reward of Al-Jannah.

Death is dictated by Allah; you cannot escape it, you cannot resist it, and you cannot keep it away from you.

99 Names of Allah

Al-Muhyee المحيي Al-Mumeet المميت
Al-Qabid القابض Al-Basit الباسط



Science Corner

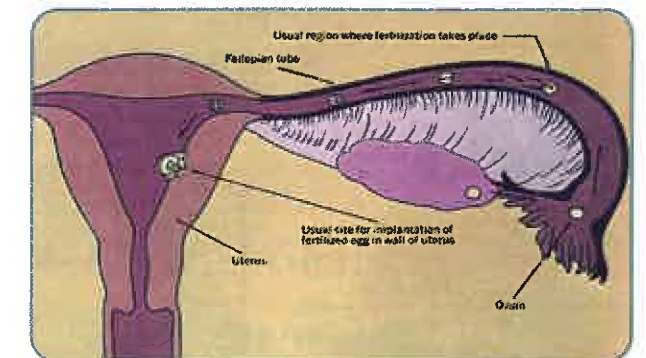
The Beginning of Life-Conception

The beginning of life is called conception. It takes place when the egg of the female is penetrated by the sperm of the male. This union between the sperm and the egg is known as fertilization. The entire process of conception in the human, as well as in other animals, is one of nature's great wonders. Let's start from the very beginning:

As mentioned elsewhere, the male sperm are deposited in the vagina near the entrance of the cervix of the uterus or womb. Nature seems to have sensed that it would be a difficult trip for the sperm to bring about conception. For this reason, 100 to 200 million sperm are provided just for the purpose of fertilizing one female egg! The millions of tiny sperms, which can be seen only under a microscope, are so delicate that they live only a few minutes unless they are successful in passing through the cervix into the uterus.

The sperm have tails, called flagella, that push them forward. Actually, sperm look very much like miniature tadpoles, and they move forward like tadpoles by wiggling their tails from side to side. When they reach the cervix, the sperm must swim through a mucous barrier that covers the entrance to the inside of the uterus. Tens of millions of sperm are unable to do this, and are lost. Those sperm that pierce the cervix then swim up the three to four inches of the inside of the

uterus to find the two exits at the upper ends where the Fallopian tubes begin. Tens of millions more sperm are lost before they get to the Fallopian tubes. Those that do survive swim into the narrow passageway of the Fallopian tube where they may finally meet an egg. But this meeting can take place only during two to three days of each month.



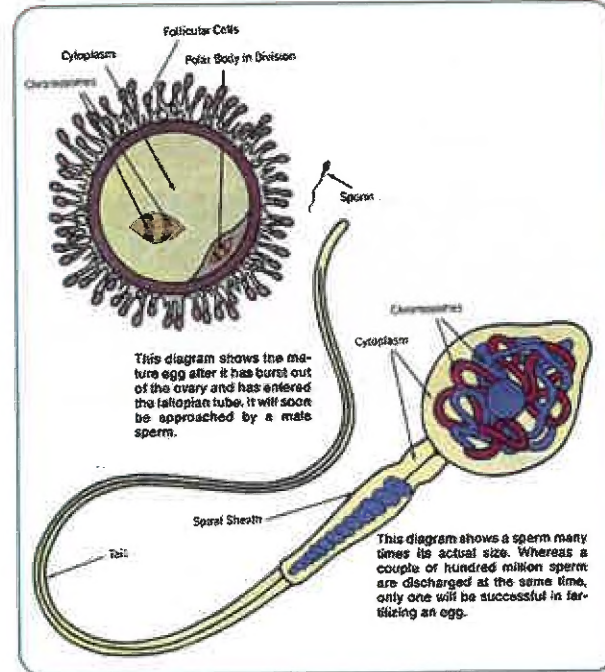
The egg leaves the ovary and enters the fallopian tube. There, it is fertilized by a single sperm. The fertilized egg begins to divide and to make many cells. When it reaches the uterus. Some 3 to 4 days later, the fertilized egg buries itself in the wall of the uterus.

Females normally have one egg, no larger than the point of a pin, that leaves an ovary each month. This is called ovulation. Ovulation usually occurs halfway between two menstrual periods.

When an egg leaves an ovary it finds its way to the funnel-shaped opening of the Fallopian tube. Nobody knows how it manages to get from the ovary to the Fallopian tube because an egg has no ability to move by itself. However, it gets there somehow. Once inside the Fallopian tube, the egg is very slowly swept down toward the uterus by tiny hairlike structures that line the tubes. These hairlike structures, called cilia, are so small they can be seen only under a microscope. It takes anywhere from three to five days for the egg to travel the three inches of the Fallopian tube, and during this time it may meet the sperm.

If an egg meets the sperm in the Fallopian tube, there is a good chance that one of the sperm will enter the egg and unite with it. This is called fertilization.

So, even if there are 100 million sperm that meet an egg in the Fallopian tube, only one will usually be able to pierce the outer coating of the egg and cause fertilization. When this happens, all the other millions of sperm die. Sometimes, however, two or more



eggs emerge from the ovary. They, too, may be fertilized, each one by a different sperm, and the result will be twins or triplets or even more. Also, twins can result by the splitting of a single fertilized egg into two.

Source: <http://www.medical-health.info/2007/01/the-beginning-of-life-conception/>

Hadeeth Shareef

عن أبي عبد الرحمن عبد الله بن مسعود رضي الله عنه ، قال : حدثنا رسول الله ﷺ وهو الصادق المصدوق قال :
(إن أحدكم يُجمَعُ خَلْقُهُ في بطن أمه أربعين يوماً نطفةً ، ثم يكون علقةً مثل ذلك ، ثم يكون مضغةً مثل ذلك ، ثم يُرسلُ إليه الملكُ فينفخُ فيه الروحَ ، ويُؤمرُ بأربع كلمات : بكتبَ رزقه ، وأجله ، وعمله ، وشقي أو سعيد . فوالله الذي لا إله غيره ، إن أحدكم ليعمل بعمل أهل الجنة ، حتى ما يكون بينه وبينها إلا ذراعٌ ، فيسبق عليه الكتابُ فيعمل بعمل أهل النار ، وإن أحدكم ليعمل بعمل أهل النار حتى ما يكون بينه وبينها إلا ذراعٌ ، فيسبق عليه الكتابُ ، فيعمل بعمل أهل الجنة)
رواه البخاري ومسلم .

Hadeeth Shareef

Abu Abdal-Rahman Abdullah bin Masud (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"Verily the creation of any one of you takes place when he is assembled in his mother's womb; for forty days he is as a drop of fluid, then it becomes a clot. Thereafter it is a lump looking like it has been chewed. Then an angel is sent to him, who breathes the soul into him. This angel is commanded to write four decrees: his provision, his life span, his deeds [based on what Allah knows the person will choose to do during his or her life], and whether he will be among the wretched or the blessed.

I swear by Allah - there is no God but He - one of you may perform the deeds of the people of Paradise until [it appears] there is naught but an arm's length between him and it, when that which has been written will outstrip him so that he performs the deeds of the people of the Hell-fire; one of you may perform the deeds of the people of the Hell-fire, until [it appears] there is naught but an arm's length between him and it, when that which has been written will overtake him so that he performs the deeds of the people of Paradise and enters therein."

[Reported by Imams Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

When and How Does the Human Life Start?

Based on the above hadeeth, human life begins in the womb. Muslim scholars and scientists have two opinions on when exactly the fetus becomes human being. The first opinion is that life begins at the time of conception. The other opinion is that life does not begin until the soul is breathed into the fetus.

Muslim scholars also have two opinions on when the soul is breathed into the fetus. Some scholars argue forty days after conception, while others argue 120 days after conception.

Contemporary Muslim scholars increasingly support the opinion that the soul is breathed into the fetus only forty days after conception. This hadeeth and another version of it narrated by Imam Muslim supports this opinion. Also, scientific facts tell that in forty days, the fetus becomes like a chewed lump of flesh as the hadeeth describes. At that point the angel breathes the soul into it.

Commentary

At a conference in Cairo, Professor Keith Moore presented a research paper and stated: "It has been a great pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Qur'an about human development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God, or Allah, because most of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad must have been a messenger of God, or Allah." [1]

"For the past three years, I have worked with the Embryology Committee of King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, helping, them to interpret the many statements in the Qur'an and Sunnah referring to human reproduction and prenatal development. At first, I was astonished by the accuracy of the Qur'an's statements that were recorded in the 7th Century AD, before the science of embryology was established.

Professor Moore also stated that: "...Because the staging of human embryos is complex, owing to the continuous process of change

during development, it is proposed that a new system of classification could be developed using the terms mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The proposed system is simple, comprehensive, and conforms with present embryological knowledge.

"The intensive studies of the Qur'an and Hadeeth in the last four years have revealed a system of classifying human embryos that is amazing since it was recorded in the Seventh Century A.D... the descriptions in the Qur'an cannot be based on scientific knowledge in the Seventh Century..."^[1]

[1] Dr. Keith Moore is a former President of the Canadian Association of Anatomists, and of the American Association of Clinical Anatomists. He was honored by the Canadian Association of Anatomists with the prestigious J.C.B. Grant Award and in 1994 he received the Honored Member Award of the American Association of Clinical Anatomists "for outstanding contributions to the field of clinical anatomy."

When and How Does Human Life Ends?

The Qur'an and the Sunnah are clear that human life ends when the angel of death takes away the person's soul, upon an order from Allah. The soul that was breathed into that person when he or she was a fetus in the womb (as you learned earlier) is now retaken. And the body of that deceased person will deteriorate and later vanish in the grave. The soul will be spared until it is united with another new body created for that same person in the Hereafter.

Let us now learn how human life medically ends. In 1985, the Islamic Organization of Medical Sciences organized a seminar on "The Islamic Concept on Human Life, Its Beginning and Its End." A group of major Muslim scholars and medical doctors and experts met in Kuwait and discussed matters of the beginning and end of human life according to scientific facts and Islamic Law.

The seminar concluded that in most cases where death occurs there is no real difficulty in recognizing it on the basis of commonly known indications through medical examination, which ascertains the absence of life signs in the deceased. It was determined that a death case is established only if the brain stem becomes void of life signs as this part of the brain is responsible for the basic biological functions. This is what is termed "death of the brain stem." A case can only be considered hopeless if the brain stem is established to be dead. In this case the life of the patient can be said to have ended even if movement or function remains for a while in the other organs of the body. These will definitely come to a standstill after the death of the brain stem.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Write a one page essay on the importance of believing that only Allah controls matters of life and death.
2. Go to a hospital lab and watch a human fetus at different stages of development.



Stretch Your Mind

1. Imagine that there is more than one god who controls life and death. How our world would look?
2. Suppose that someone came to you and said, "It is not only Allah who controls matters of life and death. Doctors, judges, governors, and criminals can cause people to die or remain alive!" How would you respond to them?



Study Questions

- 1 Who has the ultimate power of controlling matters of life and death? Support your answer with an ayah and a hadeeth.
- 2 Why did Allah create life and death? Support your answer with an ayah.
- 3 When does human life start?
- 4 When does human life end?

UNIT

A

CHAPTER

THREE

Allah Gives and Deprives Wealth

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Understand that Allah is the One who gives wealth and health.
- 2 Learn the attitudes that causes our wealth to be blessed and increased.
- 3 Learn and memorize the two ahadeeth in this chapter.

VOCABULARY

Rizq رزق

Taqwa تقوى

Tawakkul توكل

Allah is the one who provides for the human family and all other creations. His mercy is clear to His servants at all times and all situations, everywhere in the world. People usually think that the source of their rizq (sustenance) is their parents, bosses, or employers. The fact of the matter is that Allah is the ultimate provider of rizq to all of His creations. Ar-Razzaq, Ar-Raziq, Al-Mu'ti and Al-Wahhab are some of the names of Allah. If you ponder upon these names, they mean that He is the only owner of provision and He's the provider, forever. Allah says in Surat Hud,

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلٌّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ﴾

There is no moving creature on Earth but its sustenance depends on Allah: He knows the time and place of its definite abode and its temporary deposit: all is in a clear Record. (11:6)

In Surat-ur-Room, Allah challenges the idol worshipper by saying:

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُعِيْذُكُمْ ثُمَّ﴾

It is Allah Who has created you; further, He has provided for your sustenance; then He will cause you to die; and again He will give you life. (30:40)

Conditions for Obtaining Sustenance

The equation of natural resources and human effort to obtain sustenance has very eloquently been presented in Surat-ul-Waaq'ah. Allah says:

"Consider your contribution against Our laws in agriculture. You plow a field and sow seeds. Who produces crops from seeds, you or We?

Who looks after crops? A calamity may fall and destroy a crop, leaving you shocked and sym-

pathizing with your fellows and agonizing over the comprehensive loss of not only crops, but also of seeds and hard work!

Consider water, which is essential not only for crops, but also for your own existence. Do you bring it down from clouds or do We? Clouds are formed from salty sea-water which is unusable for either farming or your own consumption. What could you do if rain-water was as salty? Why can't you arrive at the right conclusion in such a clear and simple matter? Why can't you appreciate Allah's systems?

Consider fire which you use in so many ways. Who has caged heat (in firewood) in that manner? You or We?

We have created all this (you only provide work). We state these facts to remind you of that forgotten truth that We have put all this, in place so that the needy get sustenance." [56:63-73]

Laws and Guidance Concerning Rizq

1. **Everyone should spend according to his capacity.** A poor Muslim should spend as little as he or she can afford, while a wealthy person should spend more for the convenience of his family and himself. Allah says in Surat-ut-Talaq,

﴿لِيُنْفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا﴾

Let the man of means spend according to His means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief. [65: 7]

2. **Allah likes moderate spending.** Islam encourages Muslims to follow the middle way between two extremes regarding spend-

ing: extravagance and miserliness. Allah says in Surat-ul-Furqan,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا﴾

Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not miserly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes). [25:67]

3. **Wealthy Muslims must avoid arrogance and mischief.** Wealth has the tendency to make people arrogant and even mischievous. Since money is power, wealthy people often get into the habit of using this power that Allah tested them with in a wrong manner. Rather than appreciating Allah's favors on them, they disobey Him and break His rules. They may cheat, involve haram deals and show off in front of less fortunate people. Allah says in Surat-ul-Alaq,

﴿ كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّا ۖ ٦ ۚ أَن رَّاهُ أَسْتَعْيٰ ۖ ٧ ۚ ﴾

Nay, but man does break the rules in that he looks upon himself as wealthy [and powerful]. [96:6-7]

Therefore, Allah may restrict wealth on his servant to protect them from falling in major transgression. Allah says in Surat Al-Shura,

﴿ وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ يُزِيلُ بَقْدَرٍ مَّا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ ۖ ٢٧ ۚ ﴾

If Allah were to enlarge the provision for His servants, they would indeed transgress beyond all bounds through the Earth; but He sends (it) down in due measure as He pleases. For He is with His servants Well-Acquainted, Watchful. [42:27]

4. Allah may favor some over others in wealth. For a certain wisdom, Allah may bless some people more than others. Allah is our Lord and He knows best how much each should receive. Allah says in Surat Al-Nahl,

Things that help us gain and increase wealth

1. Having True Faith

Allah provides His sustenance to all people, whether they were believers or disbelievers. However, Allah blesses the sustenance He gives to His faithful and obedient believers. He makes wealth easy to obtain and useful. Allah says in Surat-ul-Baqarah,

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الشَّرْعِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمْتِغُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ۖ ١٢٦ ۚ ﴾

﴿ وَاللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي ۖ ۚ ﴾

"Allah has made some of you better than others in rizq." [Surat-ul-Baqarah (16:71)]

5. Do not envy others. Allah instructed us not to envy others when they acquire more wealth or other blessings different than ours. Envy is haram in Islam, and it does not help us gain more wealth and blessings. It may harm them, and we will be harmed too! How?. Well, envy (known as hasad in Arabic) is a sin penalized by Allah. When we allow our hearts to do it, we are not thanking Allah for His blessings. When Allah blesses someone with one of His favors, a good Muslim should be happy for him/her. We are even encouraged to make dua for our brothers and sisters who won Allah's favors. Allah says in Surat-Taha,

﴿ وَلَا تَمْدَنْ عَيْنَكَ إِلَىٰ مِمَّا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ۖ ١٣ ۚ ﴾

Do not strain your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to parties of them, the splendor of this lower life, through which We test them: but the sustenance of your Lord is better and more enduring. [20:131]

And remember Abraham said: "My Lord, make this [Makkah] a land of peace, and feed its People with fruits, - those among them who believe in Allah and the Last Day." He [Allah] said; "(Yes), and those who reject Faith, - I grant them their pleasure for a while, but will soon drive them to the torment of Fire, - an evil destination (indeed)! [2:126]

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۖ ١١ ۚ ﴾

If the people of the towns had but believed and feared Allah, We should indeed have opened out to them (All kinds of) blessings from Heaven and Earth; but they rejected (the truth), and We penalized them for their [evil] deeds. [7:96]

Companion Abdullah Ibn `Abbas ; the great interpreter of the Qur'an said: "Meaning, We would enrich them with what is good, and facilitate it for them from every side." [Tafsir Abi Sa`ood 3/253]

2. Practicing Taqwa, or Righteousness.

As you learned earlier, Allah is the owner of this universe and He is the ultimate One who distributes wealth. Therefore, the best way to obtain His good favors is by obeying Him. Indeed, obedience brings you Allah's favors. Allah says in Surat-ut-Talaq,

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۖ ٢ ۚ وَمِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۖ ٣ ۚ ﴾

[2] And for those who fear Allah, He (ever) prepares a way out, [3] And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine [65:2-3]

Companion Abdullah Ibn Mas`ood said: "Taqwa is that Allah is obeyed and not disobeyed, that He is remembered and not forgotten, and that He is thanked and not shown ungratefulness." [Reported by At-Tabaraani in al-Kabeer]

3. Observing Tawakkul, or True Reliance on Allah.

Tawakkul means putting full trust in Allah and showing true reliance on Him. A true believer trusts Allah and relies on Him more than on anyone else. He firmly believes that even if he worked so hard and got the help of all people, nothing will happen except for what Allah has permitted. On the other hand, if he didn't put forth much work, and

had little or no help from people, he would get the sustenance he needs if Allah permitted. Allah said in Surat-ut-Talaq:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۖ ٣ ۚ ﴾

And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. [65: 3]

Also Prophet Muhammad once said,

عن عمر رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله :
"لو انكم تتوكلون على الله حق توكله لرزقكم مثل ما يرزق الطير ، تغدو خماصا وتروح بطانا"
رواه الترمذي

"If you relied on Allah with a true reliance, He would provide for you the same as He provides birds: they set off in the early morning with empty stomachs and return back at the end of the day with full stomachs." [Reported by At-Tirmithi and Ahmad]

4. Being kind to relatives.

Additional to the great rewards they will win in the Hereafter, Allah rewards those who are good to their relatives and kinship by increasing and blessing their wealth in this life. Look at this great hadeeth,

عن أبي هريرة - رضي الله عنه - قال: قال رسول الله :
"مَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يُسْطَ عَلَيْهِ فِي رِزْقِهِ، وَأَنْ يُنْسَأَ لَهُ فِي أَثَرِهِ فَلْيَصِلْ رَحِمَهُ"

رواه البخاري ومسلم

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated that Rasoolullah ﷺ said: "Whoever likes to have his wealth expanded and his good deeds remembered for long time, he should be kind and close to his relatives."

Reported by At-Tirmithi

Does that mean that we are not instructed to work hard to obtain our sustenance?



No, Allah and His Prophet instructed us to trust Allah and rely on Him, but also to work hard and to try our best to achieve our goals. Indeed, relying on Allah doesn't mean that one leaves striving in this world. Allah says in Surat-ul-Mulk:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ
وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ﴾ (10)

It is He Who has made the Earth manageable for you, so navigate through its tracts and enjoy of the Sustenance which He furnishes: but unto Him is the Resurrection.[67:15]

﴿فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ (11)

And when the prayer has concluded, disperse within the land and seek the bounty of Allah.[62:10]

Types of Rizq

When we think of rizq, or wealth, one immediately thinks of money. Wealth indeed is a blessing from Allah. Allah is Ar-Razzaq, (the Ever-Provider of livelihood and all bounties) Indeed, Allah tells us in the Qur'an that He allocates the wealth.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ﴾ (51)

"Allah is He who is the provider of all "rizq", the lord of all power." [51:58]

The term 'rizq' in the Islamic context is used to mean wealth, but there is a wider meaning to it. It refers to all of the bounties of

Allah which are needed for us to be successful in this life and in the Hereafter. Rizq not only refers to money and income but also means iman, akhlaq, noble offspring, etc. Therefore, there are two kinds of rizq (sustenance):

1. Material Rizq: Some call "the lower Rizq" which consists of money, food, spouses, children, and so on.

2. Higher Rizq: Some call it "elevated rizq" which consists of guidance, iman (faith), taqwa, generosity, comprehension, wisdom, light, cleansing of the soul, elevation in Jannah (paradise), forgiveness, and the ability to do numerous good deeds.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Write a 500 word essay on who controls the distribution of wealth in natural resources in our world.
2. Find or write a story which tells that Allah is the One of grants people their wealth.



Stretch Your Mind

1. A successful businessman comes to you and boasts about the fortune he collected over the years. He claims that his own hard work alone made it all possible! How would you respond to him?
2. Why do you think Allah increases the wealth of those who are good to their relatives?



Study Questions

- 1 Who has the ultimate power of distributing rizq, or wealth? Support your answer with an ayah and a hadeeth.
- 2 What will Allah do to us in the Day of Judgment concerning the wealth we collect in this life? Support your answer with an ayah or a hadeeth.
 - a. Allah gives equal wealth to everyone.
 - b. A Muslim must be balanced when he or she spends their money.
 - c. If person becomes rich, he should spend on his family in the same manner he used to do when he was poor.
 - d. A Muslim should demonstrate true tawakkul on Allah in matters of Rizq.
 - e. True tawakkul mean that you rely on Allah to bring you rizq and not exerting much effort to make money.
 - f. It is haram to envy others who are blessed with more wealth than you.
- 3 What are the practices that help us having our wealth increased and blessed?
- 4 What are the two major types of rizq? Which one is more important, in your opinion?

UNIT

A

CHAPTER

FOUR

Ayyoub, The Prophet of Patience and Thankfulness

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Recognize who Ayyoob was.
- 2 Learn the life story of Prophet Ayyoob.
- 3 Explore the lessons that can be learned from Prophet Ayyoub's story.
- 4 Appreciate the value of patience.
- 5 Learn the different types of patience.
- 6 Learn what the Muslim should do to his or her sick Muslim fellow.

VOCABULARY

Sabr صبر

Ayyoob أيوب

Ayyoob, or Job, was a descendant of Prophet Ibraheem عليه السلام, as Allah Almighty said in Surat-ul-An'am',

وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

"And among his progeny, Dawood, Suleyman, Ayyoob, Yousuf, Musa, and Haroon." [Surat-ul-An'am 6: 84].

Ibn Is'haq, a great Muslim historian, said: "Ayyoob is son of Mus, son of Razih, son of Al-'Ays, son of Is'haq, son of Ibraheem." Ibn Asakir, another Muslim scholar, said: "Ayyoob's mother was the daughter of Lut."

Ayyoob Becomes a Messenger

Ayyoob was one of the prophets whom Allah Almighty sent as a messenger to Bilad-ush-Sham (the Levant), or present Syria.

Allah Almighty said in Surat-un-Nisaa'

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٣٣﴾

We sent inspiration to Nuh and Isma'eel, Is'haq, Ya'qoob and the Tribes, to Isa, Ayyoob." [Surat-un-Nisaa' 4: 163]

When Ayyoob (Job) عليه السلام was chosen to be the prophet, he started to teach the people about God and His religion. He advised the people to do good and shun evil. As usual, with all the prophets, very few people believed in him in the beginning. Gradually the number of his followers began to increase.

Allah's Favors Upon Ayyoub

Prophet Ayyoob عليه السلام was a prosperous man. God granted him all kinds of wealth and bliss. He had been blessed with a big family, a faithful and beautiful wife, seven boys and seven girls. He also had many friends who always gathered around him. He was also the owner of a gigantic trade. He had money, numerous barley and wheat fields, hundreds of slaves, physical strength, horses, and livestock. All that lasted for fifty years. Yet, his finest bliss was his great faith in Allah Almighty.



Prophet Ayyoob Tested

In His infinite wisdom Allah chose to try Ayyoob. He inflicted him with a number of calamities. One day, his big farm was attacked by thieves. They killed many of his servants and carried away forcibly all his cattle. Prophet Ayyoob (peace be upon him) accepted what happened to him and praised Allah.

After some time the roof of the house fell down and many members of his family were crushed. Prophet Ayyoob عليه السلام was much shocked, but he held fast to his faith in Allah. He remarked that possessions and children were the gifts from Allah. If He had taken His things, it was useless to lament over their loss.

Prophet Ayyoob عليه السلام was an example of humility, faith in Allah and patience. He suffered a number of calamities, but did not utter a single word of complaint.

As a further test from Allah, he became very ill and was covered with loathsome sores from head to foot. Some said his whole body was covered with sores to the point that he became crippled. Even some went as far as saying his flesh started to fall off. His false friends attribute his afflictions to sin. But that was far from the truth, because Prophets are without major sins. Nobody truly sympathized with him as his wife did. But all these calamities made Ayyoob عليه السلام more patient and more thankful to Allah Almighty.

What should a Muslim do when another Muslim becomes sick?

1. It is a right of the Muslim to visit the other Muslim when he or she becomes ill.
2. Offer the sick the help, he or she needs.
3. Make a sincere du'aa.

Exemplary Patience

It is narrated that Ayyoub's wife once asked him to implore Allah to cure him and have mercy on him. He asked her: "How many years have we lived in total happiness and bliss?"

She replied: "Eighty years." He said: "I feel ashamed to ask Allah before we spend an equal period of trial."

The historians gave several reports about the period of time which Ayyoob spent in his calamity: Wahb Ibn Munabbih said: 'three years', Anas Ibn Malik said: "seven years and few months," and others said: "eighteen years." During these years, Ayyoob was silent. He never complained or voiced his distress.

Faithful Wife

As the time went by, only his wife remained with him. She took care of all his needs. She even was working as a servant to feed him. But then people refused to let her work for them because they were afraid that she might be inflicted with the disease too.

She spent all the money she had on him, until it had run out. When all means ran out, the faithful wife sold her braids to put food on the table. Ayyoob asked her about the source of that food. She did not answer. But he insisted, and she uncovered her head. She was bald. At this point, Ayyoob عليه السلام cried to his Lord,

﴿وَأَتُوبُكَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ﴾
(٨٢)

"Truly distress has seized me, but You are the Most Merciful of those that are Merciful."

Also Allah said: Commemorate our servant

Ayyoob, behold, he cried to his Lord: "Satan has inflicted me with distress and suffering!" He attributed his difficulty to Satan not to Allah.

Allah's Response

Allah answered Prophet Ayyoob's prayers immediately.

﴿فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرٍّ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَابِدِينَ﴾
(٨٤)

"So We answered his call," Allah Almighty told him, "Strike with your foot: here is (water) wherein to wash, cool and refreshing, and (water) to drink." [Saad:42]. So, when he washed, the disease came out of his skin, and when he drank the water the disease purified his inside.

It was said that his wife was off for some chores and when she returned, she could not recognize her husband. She got used to seeing him for many years as a sick person, not a healthy one.

Allah's Rewards and Compensation

After the long years of calamity, Allah Almighty compensated Prophet Ayyoob. Allah Almighty said: "And We gave him [back] his people and doubled their number as a grace from Us, and a thing for commemoration, for all who have understanding."

Abu Hurayrah narrated that Rasoolullah said: "While Ayyoob was naked, taking a bath, a swarm of gold locusts fell on him, and he started collecting them in his garment. Allah then called him: "O Ayyoob! Have I not made you rich enough to need what you see? He said: "Yes, O Lord! But I cannot dis-

pense with Your Blessing." [Reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari]

Then Allah recalled to Ayyoob all His mercies on him. He was restored to prosperity, with twice as much as he had before; his brethren and friends came back to him. He had a new family of more than twenty sons and daughters. He lived to a good old age, and saw four generations of descendants.

Ibn Abbas said: "Allah was not only generous with Ayyoob, but with his wife." Allah transformed her into a young woman and gave Ayyoob twenty-six children.

The story of Ayyoob is the utmost example in holding fast to faith and being patient.

The Virtue of Patience

Prophet Ayyoob عليه السلام had suffered because of sickness like no one had suffered before. But he demonstrated a great patience and never allowed himself to weaken his belief and trust in Allah Almighty. He was patient and perseverant. Therefore, Allah listened to Ayyoob and restored his health and wealth. He was commanded to strike the Earth with his foot. Ayyoob did and a fountain gushed forth to give him a bath, clean his body, refresh his spirit, and to give him a drink and rest. Allah said:

"So We listened to him: We removed the distress that was on him, and We restored his people to him, and doubled their number,- as a grace from Ourselves, and a thing for commemoration, for all who serve Us." [Surat-ul-'Anbiya' 21: 83-84]

Du'aa' of One Who is Tested

BY LYNNE ALI

Oh Allah you are testing me
You've been testing me for years
For most of this I was brave and strong
My iman kept me from wrong

I loved that You were testing me
I felt Your love in my soul
But somehow I slipped and now I am weak
How I fell I don't know

I felt close to the Prophets who were tested the most
Felt like Sumayyah who was promised the garden
Like the Prophet Ayyoob who never complained
Except of his own lack of sabr

Oh Allah I have lost my sabr
I am failing your test, please help!
How easy it is to lose iman
Only myself I have harmed

The Day I will stand before you
And no excuse will prevail
I can point a finger at all else
But four will be pointing at me

Even Shaytan will run away
Saying he only whispered to me
Yet I followed him instead of praying to You
Asking You for the help that would have kept me strong

But its not too late yet, please help me return
Give me the strength to bear this test
For hardship is upon those You love
Help me to deserve Your love

I feel like no one could love me
But Your forgiveness exceeds your wrath
So shower upon me Your mercy
And turn all my sins to dust

The Qur'an on Patience

In this chapter you learned about Prophet Ayyoub's patience on sickness and pain. Let's learn what the Qur'an says about the different types of patience:

1. Patience during calamities and difficult times

"O my son! Perform prayer regularly, enjoin (and support) what is good (and just), and stop (and prevent) what is wrong: And be patient and constant with whatever happens to you, verily, these are of the firm commandments."

2. Patience when facing dangerous enemies

Allah says in Surat-ul-Baqarah, "And when they advanced to meet Jaloot (Goliath) and his forces, they prayed: 'Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.'" [2:250].

3. Patience when facing the aggression of tyrants and hateful people

"And why should we not put our trust in Allah while He indeed has guided us our ways. And we shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us, and in Allah, Almighty."

4. Patience when facing non-Muslims false accusations

And endure you patiently (O Muhammad), your patience is not but from Allah. And grieve not over them (polytheists and pagans, etc.), and be not distressed because of what they plot.

5. Patience when separated from parents, family and love ones

And We made their hearts firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah and bestowed upon them patience to bear the separation of their kith and kin and dwellings, etc.)

So bear with patience (O Muhammad SAW) all that they say, and glorify the Praises of your Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting.

6. Patience in accepting Allah's Qadar, or fate

"So wait with patience for the Decision of your Lord, and be not like the Companion of the Fish, when he cried out (to Us) while he was in deep sorrow.

7. Patience on Keeping up on doing the good deeds

Except those who show patience and do righteous good deeds, those: theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward (Paradise). (Chapter #11, Verse #11)

"Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds

8. Patience in learning and seeking knowledge

"[Al-Khidr] said: 'This is the parting between me and you, I will tell you the interpretation of (those) things over which you were unable to hold patience. This ayah hints to the story of Prophet Musa and the knowledgeable teacher Al-Khidr. The story shows that Al-Khidr left Musa because he was impatient in learning from Al-Khidr until the end of the learning journey as Allah wanted him to do.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Write a poem on sabr, or patience.
2. Write a 500-word essay on patience and perseverance for the sake of Allah.



Stretch Your Mind

1. Why do you think Allah tested Prophet Ayyoub with painful calamities?
2. Compare and contrast the way Allah tested Prophet Ayyoub and the way he tested Prophet Suleyman.



Study Questions

1. Write a brief profile on Prophet Ayyoub.
2. Describe the calamity that hit Prophet Ayyoub.
3. What did Prophet Ayyoub do when he lost his wealth and family?
4. What should the believer do when he or she is tested by a calamity or blessed with a favor from Allah? Support your answer with a hadeeth.
5. Was Ayyoub's wife faithful to him during his severe sickness? List three actions she did that support your answer.
6. List five types of patience? Support your answer with the fitting ayat.

UNIT

A

CHAPTER

FIVE

Patience and Perseverance: The Signs of Strong Faith*

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Learn and understand the virtue of patience in Islam.
- 2 Internalize the importance of patience and become inspired to practice patience in daily life.
- 3 Learn about the three main types of patience.
- 4 Become inspired with the patience and perseverance of Prophet Muhammad and his companions.
- 5 Internalize the ideal of patience and perseverance and become encouraged to apply it as a virtue and attitude.
- 6 Learn and memorize the hadeeth of this chapter.

VOCABULARY

Sabr صبر

The true belief in Al-Qadar requires the Muslim to demonstrate two attitudes:

1. Patience toward life's trials difficulties
2. Gratefulness to Allah for His favors

In this chapter and the following one, you will learn the two important attitudes a Muslim should demonstrate in his or her daily life: sabr, or patience, and shukr, or thankfulness to Allah. These two positive attitudes are signs of strong faith, and particularly clear understanding of the belief in Al-Qadar and proper application of it.



Hadeeth Shareef

عَنْ صُهَيْبِ الرُّومِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: "عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ" رواه مسلم

Suhayb ibn Sinan ar-Rumi narrated that Rasoolullah said, "Strange is the manner of the believer for there is good in all of his manners. And only the believer has this manner. If he is blessed with a happy time, then he will thank [Allah], thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble, he endures it patiently, thus there is a good for him in it."

Related Wisdom

"You must first have a lot of patience to learn to have patience. "Stanislaw J. Lec (1909 - 1966), "Unkempt Thoughts"

"We could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world." Helen Keller (1880 - 1968)

What is Patience?

"Sabr" is an Arabic word which means patience, perseverance and stead-fastness. Scholars have defined "patience" as a good human trait or attitude. A patient person bravely faces pains and difficulties of life and refrain from doing evil actions in reaction to life's calamities.

In the spiritual sense, patience means to stop ourselves from despairing and panicking, to stop our tongues from complaining, and to stop our hands from striking our faces and tearing our clothes at times of grief and stress.

Abu Uthman said: "The one who has patience is the one who trained himself to handle difficulties." Amr ibn Uthman al-Makki said: "Patience means to keep close to Allah and to accept calmly the trials He sends, without complaining or feeling sad." Al-Khawwas said: "Patience means to adhere to the rules of the Qur'an and Sunnah." Another scholar said: "Patience means to refrain from complaining." 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه said: "Patience means to seek Allah's help."

Patience is when a person restrains himself from being fearful during hard times. Also, a person who is patient restrains himself from doing prohibited acts and does what is obligated and righteous.

Faces of Patience

Imam Ibn-ul-Qayyim said, "There are three types of patience:

1. Patience in obeying Allah and doing righteous deeds.

Worshipping Allah and obeying Him requires patience, perseverance and discipline. Therefore, Allah commanded Prophet Muhammad to be patient as he was making act of worship and obedience. Allah says in Surat Maryam, "[Allah is the] Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him and be constant and patient in His worship." [19:65] Allah also ordered the Prophet and all parents, "And enjoin prayer on your family, and be patient in offering them." [Surat Taha: 20 132]

The messengers of Allah and all true believers needed great patience in order to fulfill their obligations of conveying the message and uplifting the conditions of individuals and society. Without this patience, they could not succeed in their tasks. Therefore, Allah (S.W.T.) commanded to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, "Therefore be patient [O Muhammad] as did the messengers of strong will." [Surat Al-Ahqaf:35]

2. Patience on abstaining from evil, disobedience and prohibited acts.

Abstaining from haram, or prohibited acts, requires a great struggle and discipline against one's desires. It takes much patience to reject the evil influences of Shaytan. Therefore, Allah (S.W.T.) will generously reward those who patiently abstain from evil.

The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) told us about the people who will receive a special reward: "Seven are (the persons) whom Allah would give protection with His shade on the day when there would be no shade but His shade (i.e., on the Day of Judgment) and among them: a youth who grew up with the worship of Allah, ...a man whom an extremely beautiful woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he rejected this offer by saying: I fear Allah...." (Imams Bukhari and Muslim)

Prophet Yousuf is another example of a person who abstained patiently from the evil lure of the wife of the King of Egypt. Prophet Yusuf chose incarceration for several years rather than committing an evil act.

3. Patience during times of hardship without complaints.

A true believer practices patience during times of hardship without voicing complaints. Facing calamities and hardship without complaining is the fruit of believing in Al-Qadar and accepting Allah's will. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: "Never a believer is stricken with a discomfort, an illness, an anxiety, a grief or mental worry, or even the picking of a thorn, that his sins are not removed for him." [Reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Benefits of Patience

Allah has guaranteed those who are patient that He will give them rewards and blessings without measure. Following are few important benefits of sabr, or patience:

1. Allah supports those who are patient. He tells them that He is with them by guiding and supporting them and granting them a clear victory. Allah says in Surat-ul-Anfal:

﴿وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

"Surely, Allah is with those who are patient." [8:46]

2. Allah loves those who are patient. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran:

﴿وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

"And Allah loves the patient." [3:146]

3. Allah forgives and rewards those who are righteous and patient. Allah says in Surat Hud:

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ﴾

"Except those who show patience and do righteous good deeds: those will be forgiven and win a great reward (Paradise)." [11:11]

4. Patience is a quality of leaders. Allah has made leadership in terms of religion conditional upon patience and certain faith. Allah tells us that the patience and piety of his Prophet Yousuf brought him to a position of power and leadership. Allah says in Surat As-Sajdah:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ آيَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ﴾

"And We made from among them (Children of Isra'eel), leaders, giving guidance under Our command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in Our ayaat." [32:34]

5. Patience enables believers to turn enemies into close friends. Allah tells us that repelling evil with kind attitude makes the evildoer become like a close friend. Allah says in Surat Fussilat:

﴿وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ﴾ وَمَا يُلْقُهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقُهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

"The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allaah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend." [41:34]

6. Allah rewards the believers with Jannah for their patience.

﴿وَجَزَاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا﴾

"And [Allah] rewarded them, because they were patient, with garden and silk." [76:12]

99 Names of Allah

As-Saboor (The Patient) الصبور

Al-Halim (The Tolerant) الحليم



Foundations of Patience

To have true patience a Muslim must have the following foundations and ideals in his or her heart and mind. These foundations and virtues help the Muslim to develop patience and perseverance as long lasting traits and attitudes :

1. Following Clear Conscience.
2. Demonstrating High Morals.
3. Shunning Shatan's Deceit
4. Fearing Nothing But Allah

1. Following Clear Conscience

Allah created each person with a conscience to let him or her know what is right and wrong in all situations. This conscience calls upon people to think and behave in the manner that pleases Allah and earns His approval. Every person also has a lower self that urges him to follow his whims and desires. However, believers always display a sure determination to ignore their lower selves by listening only to their consciences. Even if their lower self calls them to do something that appears attractive and appealing, they ignore and resist these urges.

Throughout their lives, faithful people make this judgment call and then select the most correct attitude. In daily life, this can mean ignoring the lower self's urges to behave selfishly and instead following the conscience's advice to be self-sacrificing. This behavior of the faithful people is the result of the extreme patience they display while following their consciences.

2. Living the Qur'an's Morality

Only those who possess the superior morality portrayed in the Qur'an can always display true patience. For example, one might have a very strong temper, but upon learning that Allah refers to believers as "those who control their rage and pardon other people" [3: 134], he or she exhibits forgiving behavior

even when faced with an event that normally makes him or her angry. Whatever may happen, believers continue to speak pleasantly, remain tolerant, control their anger, and show other fine moral characteristics taught by the Qur'an.

In short, what makes the believers' character superior is their consistent and high morality. The faithful try to display high morality, not only in pardoning other people, but also in displaying self-sacrifice, humility, compassion, kindheartedness, tolerance, justice, love, and respect. Allah tells the faithful to be consistent in their worship: "He is Lord of the Heavens and Earth and everything in between them, so worship Him and persevere in His worship." [Surat Maryam 19: 65]

3. Shunning Satan's Deceit

When Allah created Prophet Adam (as), He required all angels to prostrate to him. However, Iblees rebelled against Allah's order and refused to do so. Faced with Satan's rebellion, Allah cast him out of Paradise and declared him cursed until the end of time. But Satan demanded that Allah allow him to tempt people to loosen themselves in the allures of this world until the Day of Judgment, when they would be resurrected. Allah granted this, but also declared that Satan would have no power over His faithful servants:

"He [Satan] said: "My Lord, because You misled me, I will make things on Earth seem good to them, and I will mislead them all, every one of them, except those of Your servants among them who are sincere." He [Allah] said: "This is a Straight Path to Me. You have no authority over any of My servants, except for the misguided who follow you." [Surat al-Hijr, 15: 39-42]

Satan cannot influence those who display patience in maintaining their faith in our

Lord, because Allah has declared that Satan can deceive and divert only those who rebel against Allah, as he himself did. Allah calls on the faithful to take refuge in Him from Satan's deceptions. "If an evil impulse from Satan provokes you, seek refuge in Allah. He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." [Al-An'am 6: 200]

Heeding Allah's advice, "O you who believe, seek help in steadfastness and prayer. Allah is with the steadfast." [Surat Al-Imran 3:153], in order to guard themselves against Satan, they ask for our Lord's help and set their faces against Satan's deceptions.

4. Fearing Nothing But Allah

People who do not truly believe in Allah's power and greatness are subject to innumerable fears. Among these fears are the fears of other people, the dark, or certain numbers or colors, believing that they have an independent power of their own. True believers, however, know that only Allah has power, and that no one can harm or help anybody else without His permission and will. They are aware of the fact that no people or creatures can have power that is independent of Allah, and that everything owes its existence to Him. If they encounter some harm, they believe wholeheartedly that only our Lord can remove it. Allah tells the faithful to fear nothing but Him,

﴿ إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُ ۚ
فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"It was only Satan frightening you through his friends. But do not fear them—fear Me, if you are believers." [3: 175]

Due to their firm belief and trust in Allah, the true believers experience no severe sadness or depression when confronted with frightening or intimidating events. Oppression or aggression do not cause them to swerve in their devotion to Allah and their



striving to earn His approval and pleasure. The Qur'an explains this attribute, as follows:

"Those to whom people said: "The people have gathered against you, so fear them." But that merely increased their faith, and they said: "Allah is enough for us, and [He is] the Best of Guardians." [3:173]

As this verse indicates, even if the faithful are faced with pressure, they fear only Allah and show their patience by not abandoning their faith. Allah has declared that He will test His servants with fear to separate the true believers from those who have weak—or no—faith.

A Glimpse of the Prophet's Patience and Perseverance

Ten years after receiving his mission from his Lord, the Prophet (peace be upon him) set out towards At-Ta'if, about 60 kilometers from Makkah. He was hoping that the people of Ta'if may believe in him after he was persecuted by the people of Makkah for years. In his company was Zaid bin Harithah. But contrary to his expectations, the general atmosphere was terribly hostile.

The Prophet approached three brothers from the chieftains of Thaqeef. 'Abd Yaleel, Mas'ud and Habeeb, the sons of 'Amr bin 'Umair Ath-Thaqafy, met the Prophet ﷺ. He invited them to embrace Islam and worship Allah, but they boldly jeered at him and refused his invitation. "Is it true that Allah has sent you as a Messenger?" said one of them. "Has not Allah found someone else to entrust him with His message?" said the second. "I swear by Allah that I will never have any contact with you." said the third.

For ten days Rasoolullah stayed there delivering his message to several people, one after another, but all to no purpose. Stirred up to hasten the departure of the unwelcome visitor, the people hooted him through the alley-ways, showered him with stones and obliged him to flee from the city pursued by a relentless mob. Blood flowed down both his legs; and Zaid, endeavoring to shield him, was wounded in the head. The mob did not desist until they had chased him two or three miles across the sandy plains to the foot of the surrounding hills. There, wearied and exhausted, he took refuge in one of the numerous orchards, and rested against the wall of a vineyard. At a time when the whole world seemed to have turned against him, Muhammad (peace be upon him) turned to his Lord and betook himself to prayer and the following touching words are still preserved as those through which his oppressed soul gave vent to its distress. He was weary and wounded but confident of the help of his Lord:

O Allah! To You alone I make complaint of my helplessness, the scarcity of my resources and my insignificance before mankind. You are the most Merciful of the merciful. You are the Lord of the helpless and the weak, O Lord of mine! Into whose hands would You abandon me: into the hands of an unsympathetic relative who would sullenly frown at me, or to the enemy who has been given control over my affairs? But if Your wrath does not fall on me, there is nothing for me to worry about."

"I seek protection in the light of Your face, which illuminates the Heavens and dispels darkness, and which controls all affairs in this world as well as in the Hereafter. May it never be that I should incur Your wrath, or that You should be wrathful to me. And there is no power nor resource, but Yours alone."

Seeing him in this helpless situation, Rabi'a's two sons, wealthy Makkans, were moved on grounds of kinship and compassion, and sent to him one of their Christian servants with a tray of grapes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted the fruit with pious invocation: "In the Name of the Allah." The Christian servant 'Addas was greatly impressed by these words and said: "These are words which people in this land do not generally use." The Prophet (peace be upon him) inquired of him from where he came, and what religion he professed. 'Addas

replied: "I am a Christian by faith and come from Nineveh." The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said: "You belong to the city of the righteous Younus (Jonah), son of Matta." 'Addas asked him anxiously if he knew anything about Jonah. The Prophet ﷺ significantly remarked: "He is my brother. He was a Prophet and so am I." Thereupon 'Addas paid homage to Muhammad ﷺ and kissed his hands.

Heart-broken and depressed, Muhammad (peace be upon him) set out on the way back to Makkah. 'Aishah (R) said: "I asked the Prophet ﷺ if he had ever experienced a worse day than Uhud. He answered that he had suffered a lot from those people (Makkans), but the most painful was on the day he went to Ta'if. "I went seeking support from Ibn 'Abd Yalil bin 'Abd Kalal, but he rejected me. I set out wearied and grieved heedless of anything around me until I suddenly realized I was in Qarn Ath-Tha'alib, called Qarn Al-Manazil. There, I looked up and saw a cloud casting its shade on me, and Gabriel addressing me: "Allah has heard your people's words and sent you the angel of mountains to your aid." The latter called and gave me his greetings and asked for my permission to bury Makkah between the two mountains flanking Makkah. I said in reply that I would rather have someone from their offspring who will worship Allah, the All-Mighty, with no associate."

The Prophet's patience and perseverance paid off. Ten years later, the people of Makkah, Ta'if and throughout Arabia rejected paganism and accepted Islam. They followed Prophet Muhammad and recognized him as their prophet and leader.

Source: Saifur Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, *The Sealed Nectar*.

How the Prophets complained Life's Calamities?

Prophet Ya'qoob عليه السلام said:

"I only complain of my distraction and anguish to Allah." [Surat Yousuf 12:86]

Ya'qoob also said "patience is most fitting for me."

The Qur'an also tells us about Ayyoob عليه السلام:

"And (remember) Ayyoob (Job), when he cried to his Lord, "Truly distress has seized me..." [Surat-ul-Anbiyaa' 21:83]

Musa (AS) prayed to Allah saying: "O Allah, all praise is due to You, and complaint is made only to You, and You are the only One from Whom we seek help and in Whom we put our trust, and there is no power except by Your help."

Prophet Muhammad said, "O Allah, I complain to You of my weakness and helplessness."

Poem.. Mu'min and Sabr

Tallal Alie Turfe



Patience is a virtue I'll try to explain
 A blessing in disguise always to remain
 From very deep inside the well of my heart
 Peace of body and mind and the will to start
 I'm summoned by a call at the dawn of the day
 Just giving thanks to Him as I kneel to pray
 Endurance is my counsel and faith my guide
 The door is open to the struggle inside
 With knowledge of certainty, I now can see
 The reality of truth, plain as can be
 It is charity that gives meaning to life
 From the love of my caring in times of strife
 Piety and wisdom help me through the day
 But always I will return to kneel and pray
 For it is patience, the essence of my goal
 That enlightens and gives meaning to my soul.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Create an artwork for Allah's name "As-Saboor."
2. Write a story on the virtue of patience.
3. Create with your classmates a play on the sacrifice and patience of Bilal (R).



Stretch Your Mind

1. Do you think patience is a passive behavior? Support your answer with ayaat, ahadeeth and logical arguments.
2. The prophet is our role model in everything including patience and tolerance. Use what you know from the Seerah to support this statement.
3. How fearing only Allah helps you to be patient?



Study Questions

- 1 Explain the virtue of sabr in Islam.
- 2 What did Allah promise those who practice sabr?
- 3 Explain the three main types of patience.
- 4 What are the foundations that you need to develop the attitude to be patient and perseverant?
- 5 How did the prophets complain of the difficult situations they went through?

UNIT A CHAPTER

SIX

Patience and Perseverance in Daily Life

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Understand that patience and perseverance are required on daily basis.
- 2 Learn the circumstances that require patience and understand how to apply patience and perseverance in each situation.
- 3 Become inspired by the of Bilal's (R) sacrifice, patience and perseverance.

Patience is a way of life that Muslims should apply every day and in different situations. In this chapter you will learn about common life situations that require patience and how you should apply patience in these circumstances, whenever they happen.

1. Patience when losing loved ones.

One of the most emotional and painful calamities is the loss of a loved one. The death or hurt of parents, children, spouses, relatives, friends and other special individuals is sometimes hard to comprehend. Once the Prophet was passing by a woman who had been weeping over the grave of her son. The Prophet advised her to calm down and accept Allah's will. The woman did not recognize the Prophet and said, "Leave me alone, you don't know how hard his death



was on me!" The Prophet, withdrew politely, but said to her, "True patience [works well and is best rewarded] when you observe it as the first shock hits."

Allah spares a great reward for the one who acts patiently when he or she loses a

loved one. Rasoolullah once said that Allah promised, "If I test my servant with the loss of his [or her] love one and he or she demonstrates patience, I will grant him [or her] Jannah."

Umm Salamah lost her dear husband and felt deeply sad. She said: "I heard Rasoolullah say: 'Whoever is put through a trial and says:

Du'aa'

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

اللهم أجرني في مصيبي واخلفني خيرا منها

"Inna lillah wa inna ilayhi raaji'oon (to Allah we belong, and to Him is our return)

Oh, Allah, help me through my ordeal and grant me better than it [what I lost] after"

Except Allah helped him through his ordeal and gave him better than it after. She said: "So when Abu Salamah (her husband) died, I said what I was told to say by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and Allah, Almighty, granted me better than him, the Prophet of Allah himself!" [Reported by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Al-Tirmidhi and Abu Da'ud].

One time, Prophet Muhammad lost his only son, Ibraheem, so when he buried him, he cried and said,

عن عمران بن حصين قال: "لما توفي ابن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دمت عيناه فقالوا: يا رسول الله تبكي؟ فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: العين تدمع، والقلب يحزن، ولا نقول إلا ما يرضى ربنا، وإنا بك يا إبراهيم غزونون."

رواه أحمد وأبو داود

Imran Ibn-ul-Husayn said, "When the son of Rasoolullah died, the Prophet's eye shed some tears." The people then said, "Are you crying, O Rasoolullah?" The Prophet then said "The eye sheds tears, the heart feels the sorrow, and we don't say anything except what pleases our Lord, but we are truly sad."

Reported by Ahmad and Abu Dawoud

We learn from this important hadeeth that it is natural to become sad and even cry when we lose a loved one. However, we should not say or do anything that displeases Allah, like objecting to what happened or questioning God concerning the calamity that He chose to test us with. We can feel the sorrow, but at the same time, we should accept what happened, act patiently, and hope for Allah's reward and compensation.

2. Patience with Property Loss or Damage

Allah has decorated this life with many beautiful things to make mankind happy but faithful. People are required to use the blessings showered on them in the best possible way, without becoming passionately attached to them. They should realize that whatever people acquire here will remain here, and that they will have to account for their use of these blessings in the Day of Judgment. Those who understand that everything is a gift from Allah and show gratitude to Him will be rewarded, while those who forget the Day of Judgment, and so try to seize these blessings for themselves with greed, will suffer disappointment.

In the Qur'an, Allah lists some of the many blessings that He has granted to people, as follows:

﴿رُبَّيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبَّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ
وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ
مَتَكُوعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَاقِ ١٤﴾

"To mankind, the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colors: women and children, heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. The best home-coming is in the presence of Allah [in Heaven]. [3: 14]

The faithful use these blessings in the best possible way, but at no time become addicted to them. They know that, as with everything else in the world, possessions and goods are part of the environment created to test them. Knowing that the blessings of this world are temporary, and that the home of the real blessings is the afterlife, they have no selfish ambitions.

Since they feel neither ambition nor passion

for worldly goods, they show patience whether times are good or bad. When they lose their property or it is damaged, they do not sink into sorrow or worry. If they obtain a large amount of property by working for years, and then lose it all in a day, they know that Allah is testing their faith and patience. Therefore, they do not become distraught if their houses, orchards, or gardens are destroyed, or if their businesses end up going bankrupt. Despite all of these trials, they live in the comfort provided by the knowledge that Allah will ease their burdens, clear their way, conclude matters to their benefit, and reward their patience with better things in the afterlife.

People who are passionately attached to this life cannot stand it when their hard-earned property suffers any loss or damage, and so they display rebellious behavior. Forgetting that Allah is the true owner of all property, and that He can give more than He has taken away, if He so wills, they cannot see any good in such an event and so cannot show any patience.

Such tests reveal the difference between the faithful, who show patience for the sake of Allah, and those who pursue worldly pleasure only and forget about the afterlife. The believers do not grieve or despair when they lose their property, for their only intention is to use everything they possess, physically and spiritually, to worship Allah and earn His approval. In other words, they have already devoted these possessions to Allah. In return for their devotion, they receive the following reward:

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ
مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ
الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ
وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ ١٥٦ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ
مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ١٥٧﴾

"We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger and the loss of wealth, life, and fruits. But give good news to the steadfast. Who say, when hit with calamity: "To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return" They are those on whom (Descend) blessings from Allah, and mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance." [Surat-ul-Baqarah 2:155-157]

3. Patience During Hunger or Poverty

In addition to testing people with a loss of property or their business, Allah may also test them with poverty and hunger.

However, it should be realized that Allah creates a different test for every person. For this reason, not everyone will face all of these tests in the same way and under the same conditions. In fact, Allah creates the secret of the test by sending the same test to people in a wide variety of forms and in unexpected ways. Those who have true faith and devotion are prepared to face these difficulties in all of their forms by relying on the power of their faith and by their submission to Allah.

Disbelievers forget that only Allah gives the countless favors that Allah blessed them with in this world, but they show Him no gratitude. In fact, if even one blessing is removed, they rebel against Allah and show ingratitude. In communities that are far from religion, one can find such examples on a regular basis. Rich people who become poor lose many blessings that Allah has bestowed upon them in the past. Ignoring the fact that their houses, cars, clothes, foods, and drinks were Allah's gifts to them, they believe that all such things belonged to them alone. Unable to learn the intended lesson and ask Allah to grant new blessings, they do not put their trust in Allah, and thus turn a beneficial test against themselves.

On the other hand, true believers remain pleased with their Lord when rich or poor, hungry or fed, and they will be rewarded

with Allah's mercy. Allah says in Surat-ul-Baqarah,

﴿أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُم مِّثْلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِن قَبْلِكُم مَّسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ ۚ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ٢١٤﴾

Or did you suppose that you would enter Paradise without facing the same as those who came before you? Poverty and illness afflicted them, and they were shaken to the point that the Messenger and those who believed with him said: "When is Allah's help coming?" Be assured that Allah's help is very near." [Surat-ul-Baqarah 2:214]

Allah tells us that these people were afflicted with poverty and illness and sought refuge in His help. We must always remember that He gives the good news that, for those who are patient and meet such a test with good behavior, whatever the circumstances, His help is very near. We know this because He promises that while testing the faithful, He will ease their burden. Allah also proclaimed in Surat-ul-Inshirah

﴿إِن مَّعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ٦﴾

"For truly with hardship comes ease." [Surat-ush-Sharh 94:6]

Although he could become a very rich man, the Prophet preferred to live as a poor man. A'ishah once said, "Two or more months used to pass without being able to cook food." Most of the Sahabah led a very modest and poor life, but they stood fast on their faith and devotion to Allah. In order to win Allah's approval, they remained patient on His path despite thirst, poverty, and intolerable hunger, and they continued to struggle along with our Prophet ﷺ.

Allah says about those patient believers in Surat-ut-Tawbah:

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَلَا نَصَبٌ
وَلَا مَخْمَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَطْغُونَ مَوْطِنًا
يَعْبِطُ الْكُفَّارُ وَلَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوِّ نِيلًا
إِلا كُنِبَ لَهُمْ بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

"That is because no thirst or weariness or hunger will afflict them in the Way of Allah, nor will they take a single step to infuriate the unbelievers, nor to secure any gain from the enemy, without a right action being writ-

ten down for them because of it. Allah does not let the wage of the good-doers go to waste." [Surat-ut-Tawbah 9:120]

As we can see, Allah announces that the patience displayed by the tested believers will be rewarded, and that none of their good acts will be overlooked on the Day of Judgment. He also proclaims His mercy toward the faithful by describing them as those "who [He] has preserved them from hunger and secured them from fear" [Surat Quraysh 106: 4].

Selected Story

Abu Hurayrah: Hungry Most of the Time

Abu Hurayrah narrated : "The people used to say, "Abu Hurayrah narrates too many narrations." In fact I used to keep close to Allah's Apostle and was satisfied with what filled my stomach. I ate no leavened bread and dressed no decorated striped clothes, and never did a man or a woman serve me, and I often used to, press my belly against gravel because of hunger, and I used to ask a man to recite a Qur'anic verse to me, although I knew it, so that he would take me to his home and feed me..

And the most generous of all the people to the poor was Ja'far bin Abi Talib. He used to take us to his home and offer us what was available therein. He would even offer us an empty folded leather container (of butter), which we would split and lick whatever was in it.

[Reported by Al-Bukhari]

Hadeeth Shareef

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله ﷺ :

"أَحْفَظُ اللَّهَ تَجِدُهُ أَمَامَكَ ، تَعْرِفُ إِلَى اللَّهِ فِي الرَّخَاءِ يَعْرِفُكَ فِي الشَّدَّةِ ، وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ يُصِيبُكَ ، وَمَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ ، وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مَعَ الصَّبْرِ ، وَأَنَّ الْفَرْجَ مَعَ الْكَرْبِ ، وَأَنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا"

رواه أحمد والترمذي

Ibn Abbas narrated that the Prophet Muhammad also says, "Be mindful of Allah, [for] you will find Him before you. Get to know Allah in prosperity, and He will know you in adversity. Know that what has passed you by was not going to befall you, and that what has befallen you was not going to pass you by. And know that victory comes with patience, relief with affliction, and ease with hardship."

[Reported by Ahmad and At-Tirmithi]

4. Patience During illness

True believers are usually patient and steadfast in cases of illness, accident and injury. When faced with such problems, the believers behave steadfastly and with patience because of their deep faith in Allah and the Hereafter. They hope that after they enter Paradise, Allah will re-create them in such a fine form that it cannot be compared with their worldly bodies. Their hope for a great reward causes them to become steadfast and patient when facing medical calamities. They always remember that whatever they have suffered in this short life will entitle them to a great reward in the eternal afterlife.

Prophet Ibraheem (as) is quoted in the Surat-ush-Shu'araa' saying ,

﴿ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴾

"And when I am ill, He heals me."
[Surat-ush-Shu'araa' 26: 80].

Like Prophet Ibraheem (as), believers also know that Allah creates both the illness and the cure, and so there is hope when they fall ill. They are grateful to Allah for those years in which He allowed them to live in health. Understanding that a healthy life is only one of Allah's many gifts to them, they continue to behave gratefully even when they are ill.

Disbelievers cannot show patience in events of serious illness, so they sink into great hopelessness, depression and grief. For example, those with crippled limbs say that they would rather die than live with a handicap; some even try to commit suicide. Believing that this life is the only one that they have, they think that living with certain defects and deficiencies makes life meaningless. Even if they do not try to commit suicide, they develop a very unpleasant personality and try to create problems for those around them. Whether they accept their situ-



ation or not, there is no way that they can avert such an event. If they put their trust in Allah, however, they may hope that He will allow them to be reborn in Paradise with a brand new body that is flawless, imperishable, and cannot be damaged. But if they fail to trust in Allah, their present life and their future life in the Hereafter will be destroyed. Their ignorance will cause them to rebel against Allah and be "rewarded" with Hell.

The behavior of those who live the Qur'an's morality is completely different. When they are injured, lose an organ, or experience a similar disaster, their behavior does not change. Knowing that they are being tested, and that the end result will be positive, they remain patient and do their best to earn Allah's approval. Even if they can no longer make any physical effort to realize this goal, they try to develop ideas that can benefit people and remind them of the Hereafter.

Those who turn away from Allah when they become ill, or when they are injured, are not aware of their great error, for only Allah can heal them or rescue them from their illness. Doctors, medicines, and treatments can be provided only with Allah's permission.

Understanding this, the faithful face their illness with patience and patiently ask Him for a cure. They also make the best possible use of doctors, medicines, and treatments, and always remember that these will be of benefit only if Allah wills it.

The Qur'an gives the example of Prophet Ayyoob (as), who always sought refuge in Allah when faced with illness. Allah praises his morality, as follows: "We found him steadfast. What an excellent servant! He truly turned to his Lord." [Surat Saad 38:44]. His patience and devotion to Allah are described, as follows:

"And Ayyoob, when he called out to his Lord, [said]: 'Great harm has afflicted me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful.' We responded to him and removed from him the harm that was afflicting him, restored his family to him and the same again with them, as a mercy direct from Us and a reminder to all worshippers." [Surat-ul-Anbiyaa' 21:83-84]

The superior morality shown by Prophet Ayyoob (as) when he was faced with this situation can be understood from his sincere prayer to Allah. When he was in trouble and sick, he turned to Allah, not away from Him. He showed steadfastness and patience, knowing that only Allah's mercy and compassion would help him.

As we can see in these and all other cases, Allah helps those who are patient. One verse expresses this assistance, as follows:

"And be steadfast. Allah is with the steadfast." [Surat-ul-Anfal 8:46]

5. Patience when Facing Injustice

Those who do not follow the Qur'an's morality cannot exercise true justice. They do not consider that they will have to account

for all of their actions in the afterlife, and so feel no need to be careful in this matter. Since they follow their earthly desires rather than their consciences, they make impulsive, instead of rational, decisions. When they become angry, they immediately succumb to their anger and seek revenge. Such acts fill the newspapers and the television newscasts. We hear when someone attacks his boss when he is fired, slanders somebody who has interfered with her business, spreads malicious gossip about his fiancée who broke up with him, or responds to a person who threatens her with even worse threats. We meet such people all the time. They respond to a bad act or an injustice in the same manner and violate the morality called for by the Qur'an. Indeed, sometimes people may even try to kill those who have interfered with their interests.

The faithful may be subjected to the unjust behavior of such people as part of their lifelong test. Unlike those given as examples above, they do not respond to injustice with injustice or to wrongdoing with more wrongdoing. But this does not mean that they stand by idly and do nothing to fight such injustice. However, rather than making rash decisions and jumping to conclusions, they act at all times in a well-balanced manner that comes from their trust in Allah.

Their patience and steadfastness in such cases springs from their awareness that Allah controls everything and possesses eternal justice. Allah tells us that on the Day of Judgment, everybody will have to account for what they did while in this world, and that no injustice will be done to them. Hence, those who committed injustice thoughtlessly, or behaved in an unfair manner, will receive their "reward" on that day. Allah's eternal justice is described, as follows:

"We will set up the just balance on the Day of Rising, and no one will be wronged in any way. Even if it is no more than the weight of a grain of a mustard-seed, We will produce it. We are sufficient as a Reckoner." [Surat-ul-Anbiyaa' 21:47]

"There are only grounds against those who wrong people and act as tyrants in the land without any right to do so. Such people will have a painful punishment." (Surat-ush-Shu'raa' 42: 42)

Have fear of a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every self will be paid in full for what it earned. They will not be wronged. [Surat-ul-Baqarah 2:281]

The faithful who know this law of Allah are patient in the face of injustice, thanks to the serenity that they have inside themselves. In the following verse, Allah promises that in exchange for this patience, He will bring help:

"Allah will certainly help those who help Him—Allah is All-Strong, Almighty." [Surat al-Hajj, 40]

Selected Story

Prophet Yousuf Defeats Injustice with Faith and Patience

Prophet Yousuf (as) faced many injustices throughout his life, especially by his brothers. He faced such unfortunate injustice with remarkable devotion and patience; Allah helped him and gave him strength. All that happened to him from his childhood onward was designed to test his patience and that of his father, Prophet Ya`qoob (as). First, Prophet Yousuf (as) was thrown into a well by his jealous brothers. After this, a passing caravan found him and took him to Egypt, where he was sold as a slave. The Qur'an speaks of Prophet Ya`qoob's (as) patience when confronted with this event, and of his request to Allah for help against this plot. Allah says in Surat Yousuf,

"They then produced his shirt with false blood on it. He [Ya`qoob] said: 'It is merely that your lower selves have suggested something to you which you did, but beauty lies in showing steadfastness. Allah alone is my help in the face of the event you describe.'" [12: 18]

In addition to this, Prophet Yousuf (as) was slandered by the wife of his master, the Egyptian vizier. Even though his innocence was perfectly clear, Prophet Yousuf (as) was thrown into prison, where he remained for many years. However, he never forgot that Allah was testing him, and so took refuge in Him, asked for His help, and exhibited outstanding patience. He did not forget that Allah would eventually confound the schemes of the unbelievers and that the faithful would be successful. In return for his steadfast devotion and patience, Allah gave him blessings that would please him both in this world and in the afterlife.



"The king said: 'Bring him to me straight away, so that I may draw him very close to me.' When he had spoken with him, he [the king] declared: 'Today you are trusted, established in our sight.' He [Yousuf] said: 'Entrust the treasures of the land to me, for in truth I am a knowing guardian.' Thus We established Yousuf in the land so that he could live in any place he pleased. We grant Our grace to anyone We will, and do not allow to go to waste the wage of any people who do good. But the wages of the Hereafter are the best for people who believe and have done their duty." [Surat Yousuf 12: 54-57]

Years after these events, Allah brought Prophet Yousuf عليه السلام face-to-face with his treacherous brothers. He stated his faith in Allah, despite the injustice that he had suffered, and the compassion that Allah showed him, as follows:

"They asked: 'Are you Yousuf?' He said: 'I am indeed Yousuf, and this here is my brother. Allah has acted graciously to us. As for those who do their duty and are steadfast, Allah does not allow to go to waste the wage of any people who do good.' [Surat Yousuf 12:90]

All of this material related in the Qur'an about Prophet Yousuf عليه السلام is an important example of the ultimate hidden causes that can be revealed by patience. The help that Allah gave to him is equally available for those who are faithful. Allah thwarts the plots devised against the believers and responds to the injustices committed against them.

6. Patience with Slander, Hurtful Words, and the Mistakes of Others

Allah says that among the tests believers may face are troubling statements made by the unbelievers, as follows:

"You will hear many abusive words from those given the Book before you, and from those who are unbelievers. But if you are steadfast and guard against evil, that is the most resolute course to take. [3:186]

All prophets throughout history have met with slander and accusations from the peoples to whom they were sent. In particular, the leaders of these people who deny faith take the lead in such behavior and try to incite the unbelievers against the believers.

The most important reason for this is that the true religion offers a moral code that may deprive them of some worldly advantages that they obtained by unjust means. Since they hold a superior position in their communities in terms of wealth, rank, and status, they can easily exploit their people and convince them that injustice and wrongdoing are reasonable.

We can see one of the clearest examples of this in the behavior of Pharaoh, who enslaved and abused the Children of Isra'eel. Allah sent Prophet Musa عليه السلام as a savior to these people, who were exploited and forced to work in very arduous conditions. Pharaoh understood that the true religion instructed him to behave justly, mercifully, and with a good conscience toward the Children of Isra'eel. Instead of obeying Allah, he tried to discredit Prophet Musa (as) and his followers in the people's eyes. By doing this, he thought that nobody would respect the religion preached by Prophet Musa (as)

and that a danger to his own interests would thereby be averted. He also hoped that such slander would destroy the believers' morale and that they might abandon their efforts to spread the faith. The Qur'an relates some of these slanders, as follows:

"We sent Musa with Our Signs and clear authority to Pharaoh, Haman, and Qarun. But they said: 'A lying magician.' [40:23-24]

"But he turned away with his forces, saying: 'A magician or a madman!' [51:39]

What Pharaoh and his circle said to Prophet Musa (as) was not unique to them. All Allah's prophets and messengers who were sent to teach His religion faced the same accusations of lying and sorcery, being madmen or poets, or seeking profit for themselves. The fact that the faithful always have the same insulting words thrown at them, regardless of time or place, is not coincidental. On the contrary, these are tests that Allah created to observe their patience and steadfastness.

The Qur'an tells us of such situations, as follows:

"Equally, no messenger came to those before them without their saying: 'A magician or a madman!' [Surat-uth-Thariyat 51:52]

Allah tells us that such insults were hurled at Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions:

"When they are told: 'Believe in the way that the people believe,' they exclaim: 'What! Are we to believe in the way that fools believe?' No indeed! They are the fools, but they do not know it." [Surat-ul-Baqarah 2:13]

"When they were told, 'There is no god but Allah,' they were arrogant. They said, 'Are we to forsake our gods for a mad poet?' [Surat-us-Saffat (37: 35-36)]

Faced with all of these slanders, Allah's Prophets and pious servants behaved with outstanding patience, took refuge in Him, and asked for His help. In the Qur'an, Allah responds to the behavior of the unbelievers who seek to abuse the Prophets, as follows:

"Do not obey the unbelievers and hypocrites, and disregard their abuse of you. Put your trust in Allah. Allah suffices as a Protector. [33:48]

As stated above, Allah points out that He expects the faithful to live by the Qur'an's morality regardless of what difficulties they may encounter. Thus, the faithful ignore all such behavior and move forward with devotion, patience, and true knowledge. In fact, without knowing it, the unbelievers' behavior only strengthens the believers' faith and increases the joy and excitement they feel about their religion and high moral code.

Keeping good friends usually requires patience and perseverance. Allah says in Surat-ul-Kahf:

"And keep yourself [O Muhammad] patiently with those [believers] who call on their Lord [your companions]." [18:28].





Hadeeth Shareef

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه: قال رسول الله ﷺ: "المؤمن الذي يخالط الناس ويصبر على أذاهم خير من الذي لا يخالط الناس ولا يصبر على أذاهم."

رواه الترمذي وابن ماجه

The Prophet ﷺ said, "It is better for you to mix yourself around people who may harm you, and to be patient with them, then it is to isolate yourself from them, and to not practice patience from their harm."

Selected Story

Abu Bakr and the Slanderer

Once, a person was verbally abusing Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه while the Prophet ﷺ was curiously watching with a smile. After taking much abuse quietly, Abu Bakr responded to a few of the person's comments. At this, the Prophet exhibited his disapproval, got up and left. Abu Bakr caught up with the Prophet and wondered, "O Messenger of Allah, he was abusing me and you remained sitting. When I responded to him, you disapproved and got up." The Messenger of Allah responded, "There was an angel with you responding to him. When you responded to him, Satan took his place." He then said "O Abu Bakr, there are three solid truths: if a person is wronged and he acts patiently (without seeking revenge) just for the sake of Allah Almighty, Allah will honor him and give him the upper hand with His help; if a person opens a door of giving gifts for cementing relationships with relatives, Allah will give him abundance; and, if a person opens a door of seeking charity for himself to increase his wealth, Allah will further reduce his wealth."

This story is reported by Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Abu Hurayrah.

PROFILE

Bilal Ibn Rabah:

The Hero Who Taught the World Patience and Perseverance

Bilal was an Abyssinian from Africa. His destiny made him a slave of some people of the tribe of Jum'ah in Makkah, where his mother was one of their slave girls. He led the life of a slave whose bleak days were alike, and who had no right over his day and no hope for his tomorrow.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and the holy religion of Islam made this weak Abyssinian slave a teacher to all humanity in the art of perseverance, faith, and defending it with whatever it takes.

When Bilal's owners found out he had embraced the religion of Islam, they took him out in the midday heat when the desert sand created intense heat. They would throw him naked on its scorching rocks and bring a burning hot rock, which took several men to lift from its place, and throw it onto his body. This savage torture was repeated every day until the hearts of some of his executioners took pity on him. Finally, they agreed to set him free on condition that he would speak well of their gods, even with only one word. That would allow them to keep their pride so that the tribe of Quraysh would not say they had been defeated and humiliated by the resistance of their slave.

But even this one word, which he could simply say and with it buy his life and soul without losing his faith or abandoning his conviction, Bilal refused to say. Indeed, he refused to say it and began to repeat his last- ing chant instead: "Ahad, Ahad, meaning the

One... the One!" (Allah is the One and Only God). His torturers shouted at him, imploring him, "Mention the name of Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzaa." But he answered, "The One. The One." They said to him, "Say as we say." But he answered them with remarkable mockery and sarcasm, "Indeed, my tongue is not good at that."

So Bilaal remained in the melting heat and under the weight of the heavy rock, and by sunset they raised him up and put a rope around his neck. Then they ordered their boys to take him around the hills and streets of Makkah. Bilaal did not mention anything other than his holy chant, "The One. The One."

When the night overtook them, they began bargaining with him, "Tomorrow, speak well of our gods, say, 'My lord is Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzaa,' and we'll leave you alone. We are tired of torturing you as if we are the tortured ones." But he shook his head and said, "The One. The One." So, Umayyah Ibn Khalaf, his master, kicked him and exploded with exasperating fury, and shouted, "What bad luck has thrown you upon us, O slave of evil? By Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzaa, I'll make you an example for slaves and masters." But Bilaal answered with the holy greatness and certainty of a believer, "The One. The One."

And he who was assigned to play the role of a sympathizer returned to talking and bargaining. He said "Take it easy, Umayyah. By

Al-Laat, he will not be tortured again. Bilaal is one of us and his mother is our slave girl. He will not be pleased to talk about and ridicule us because of his Islam." But Bilaal gazed at their lying cunning faces, and his mouth slackened like the light of dawn. He said with a calmness that shook them violently, "The One. The One."

It was the next day and midday approached. Bilaal was taken to the sun-baked ground. He was patient, brave, firm, and expecting the reward in the Hereafter.

Abu Bakr Al-Seddeeq went to them while they were torturing him and shouted at them, "Are you killing a man because he says, 'Allah is my Lord?' Then he shouted at Umayyah Ibn Khalaf, "Take more than his price and set him free." It was as if Umayyah were drowning and had caught a lifeboat. It was to his liking and he was very much pleased when he heard Abu Bakr offering the price of Bilaal's freedom, since they had despaired of crushing him. And since they were merchants, they realized that selling him was more profitable to them than killing him.

They sold him to Abu Bakr, and he emancipated him immediately. Bilaal took his place among free men. When Al-Seddeeq put his arm round Bilaal, rushing with him to freedom, Umayyah said to him, "Take him, for by Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzaa if you had refused to buy him except for one ounce of gold, I would have sold him to you." Abu Bakr realized the bitterness and disappointment hidden in these words. It was appropriate not to answer, but because they violated the dignity of this man who had become his brother and his equal, he answered Umayyah saying, "By Allah, if you had refused to sell him except for a hundred ounces, I would have paid it." He departed with his companion to the Messenger of Allah, giving him news of his liberation, and there was a great celebration.

Source: "Men Around the Messenger (pbuh)." By Khalid Muhammad Khalid.

99 Names of Allah

As-Shakoor (The Thankfull and The Thanks-Deserving)

الشكور



CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

Create an audio or video presentation for yourself explaining how a Muslim can observe patience in different difficult situations a person may experience.



Stretch Your Mind

How does patience affect your behavior toward others.



Study Questions

- 1 Explain how a Muslim should practice when losing a love one.
- 2 Explain how a Muslim should practice sabr in times of illness.
- 3 Explain how a Muslim should practice sabr losing property.
- 4 Explain how a Muslim should practice sabr in times of hunger.
- 5 Explain how a Muslim should practice sabr when hurt by slander.

UNIT A CHAPTER SEVEN

Shukr: Thankfulness to Allah

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Learn the concept of shukr in Islam.
- 2 Become inspired to demonstrate thankfulness to Allah in daily life.
- 3 Learn the three interrelated types of thankfulness.

VOCABULARY

Shukr شكر

Ni'mah نعمة

Shukr, or gratitude, is a very important principle in Islam. It is a quality of the believers and it is a source of all goodness. Shukr is used in the Qur'an sometimes as equivalent to faith. The faithful are thankful people to Allah and then to those who are kind to them. While the unfaithful are ungrateful to Allah and to the kind people around them.

The Qur'anic word for thanks and gratitude is shukr. It is mentioned in the Qur'an many times. It is the quality of human beings and it is also the quality of Allah. According to scholars, shukr means to recognize the favors of others. A faithful person thus is the one who acknowledges and recognize the endless favors of Allah.

Allah is the Source of All Favors and Blessings

Allah is the sole Creator of man and the whole universe. He made every single thing in the natural world and enabled us to utilize it for our own good. Allah says in Surat-ul-Mulk,

﴿قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (٢٣)



"Say: He is the One Who brought you into being and made for you the ears and the eyes and the hearts: little is it that you give thanks." [67:23]

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ﴾ (١٥)

"He is the One Who made the earth smooth for you, therefore go about in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His sustenance, and to Him is the return after death." [Surat Tabarak 67:15]

Every نعمة ni'mah, or gift, we have in this world is from Allah. Allah says in Surat-un-Nahl,

﴿وَمَا يَكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ تُمْرًا إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضَّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْرُونَ﴾ (٥٣)

"And whatever favor is (bestowed) on you it is from Allah; then whenever harm bothers you, you call upon Him and cry for aid." [16:53]

And the gifts of Allah cannot be counted, for he is giving us all things we need. Allah says in Surat-Ibraheem,

﴿وَأَتَاكُمْ مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِن تَعْدُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا إِنَّا الْإِنسَنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ﴾ (٣٤)

"And He gives you of all that you ask Him; and if you count Allah's favors, you will not be able to number them; most surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful." [14:34]

Scholars call Surat-un-Nahl (The Bees) the surah of the favors of Allah. In this particular surah, Allah details many of his favors, blessings and gifts He granted to mankind and His other creations. Recite and reflect upon the following beautiful ayaat:

سورة النحل

Surat-un-Nahl 1-18

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿١﴾ أَنْزَلَ الْمَلَكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٢﴾ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ تَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٤﴾ وَالْأَنْعَامَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا دِفْءٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرْجَوْنَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَتَحْمِلُ أَنْفَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَمْ تَكُونُوا بِلَافِيهِ إِلَّا يَشِيقُ الْإِنْفُسِ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْإِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَايزٌ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الشَّجَرِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَنُهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَازِيرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَالْقَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسٍ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَعَلَّمَتِ بِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِنْ تَعْدُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

Understood Meaning

- [1] Allah's commandment has come, therefore do not desire to hasten it; glory be to Him, and highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him).
- [2] He sends down the angels with the inspiration by His commandment on whom He pleases of His servants, saying: Give the warning that there is no god but Me, therefore be careful (of your duty) to Me.
- [3] He created the Heavens and the Earth with the truth, highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him).
- [4] He created man from a small seed and lo! he is an open contender.
- [5] And He created the cattle for you; you have in them warm clothing and (many) advantages, and of them do you eat.
- [6] And there is beauty in them for you when you drive them back (to home), and when you send them forth (to pasture).
- [7] And they carry your heavy loads to regions which you could not reach but with distress of the souls; most surely your Lord is Compassionate, Merciful.
- [8] And (He made) horses and mules and asses that you might ride upon them and as an ornament; and He creates what you do not know.
- [9] And upon Allah it rests to show the right way, and there are some deviating (ways); and if He please He would certainly guide you all aright.
- [10] He it is Who sends down water from the cloud for you; it gives drink, and by it (grow) the trees upon which you pasture.
- [11] He causes to grow for you thereby herbage, and the olives, and the palm trees, and the grapes, and of all the fruits; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who reflect.
- [12] And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon, and the stars are made subservient by His commandment; most surely there are signs in this for a people who ponder;
- [13] And what He has created in the Earth of varied hues most surely there is a sign in this for a people who are mindful.
- [14] And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleaving through it, and that you might seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks.
- [15] And He has cast great mountains in the Earth lest it might be convulsed with you, and rivers and roads that you may go aright,
- [16] And landmarks; and by the stars they find the right way.
- [17] Is He then Who creates like him who does not create? Do you not then mind?
- [18] And if you would count Allah's favors, you will not be able to number them; most surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

Humans Must Grateful to Their Creator

The Qur'an teaches that human beings were created by God for the purpose of being grateful to him. "It is he who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers when you knew nothing, and he gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affection so that you may give thanks (to God)" [Surat-un-Nahl 16:78].

The Qur'an also explains that one of Satan's main aims is to keep people from being grateful. After God sent him out of the garden for his arrogance and disobedience, Satan vowed in response: "I will lie in wait for them (human beings) on your straight way. Then I will assault them from in front of them and behind them, from their right and their left. Nor will you find, in most of them, gratitude (for your mercies)." [Surat-ul-Araf 7:16-17]

Most faiths emphasize being grateful to God as a means of worship. At the essence of Islam is the teaching that those seeking inner peace must develop patience and trust in God such that they are thankful to him in

every situation.

According to Islamic belief, one reason God allows people to undergo difficulty and trials during their lives is to test who will remain grateful to him. People who remain thankful, even in the face of great hardship, enter into a state of intimacy with their Lord. They attain an inner peace that protects them from the storms of the outside world.

Most of us can easily list many blessings for which we are thankful. We also tend to find it easy to list the difficulties in our lives. We often think that if God would just fix our problems for us, then we would be completely content. Our challenge is to learn to always be thankful for and content with God's bounties, even in adversity.

Gratitude to God does not arise from the removal of external stressors; rather, it is an internal state of the heart. This state is consciously achieved by continuous struggle and effort as we reflect on the blessings and mercy of God and strive to block out the whispers of negativism and discontent that keep our souls in a state of ingratitude.

The Prophets Were Thankful

Allah has described His prophets and messengers among those who were thankful people. Prophet Noah was a grateful servant of Allah (*Nuh; surely he was a grateful servant 17:3*). Prophet Abraham used to thank Allah for His many blessings (Surely Ibraheem was an exemplar, obedient to Allah, upright, and he was not of the polytheists. *Grateful for His*

favors; He chose him and guided him on the right path.16:121). Prophet David and his family were told to be grateful to Allah (*give thanks, O family of Dawood! and very few of My servants are grateful. 34:13*). Allah told His Prophet Muhammad: (*Nay, but worship Allah, and be of those who give thanks*) [Surat-uz-Zumar 39:66].

Prophet Muhammad Teaches Muslims the gratitude to Allah

Prophet Muhammad obeyed Allah and was a role model in showing his faithful gratitude to Allah. He used to thank Allah day and night. When he woke up, he would say, "Thanks be to Allah Who brought us to life after He made us to die, and to Him is the

resurrection." And when the Prophet ﷺ went to bed, he would say, "In Your name I die and I live." (Al-Bukhari).

When the Prophet ﷺ ate or drank, he would say, "Thanks be to Allah Who gave us food and drink and made us Muslims." (At-Tirmithi).

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ put on any new garment, he would say, "O Allah, thanks be to You; You gave me this to wear. I ask You to give me the good of this dress and the good for which it is made and I ask You to protect me from the evil of this dress and from the evil of that for which it is made." (At-Tirmidhi).

When the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) mounted his camel to go on a journey, he would say "Allahu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest) three times and then he would say, "Glory to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could never have accomplished this (by ourselves). And to our Lord, surely, must we turn back! [43:13]. O Allah, we ask You on this journey righteousness and piety and the deeds that are pleas-

ing to You. O Allah, make this journey easy for us and shorten its distance. O Allah, You are the Companion in journey and You are the Guardian for the family (left behind). O Allah, we ask You to protect us from the exhaustion of journey, from bad scenes, and from bad return to our property and family." When he returned he would say, "Returning, repenting, worshiping, and praising our Lord." (Muslim).

Islam does not only teach us to thank Allah, but we are also told to thank our parents, our spouses, our friends, our neighbors, and all those who do any good to us. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Those who do not thank people, they do not thank Allah." (At-Tirmidhi).

Types of Thankfulness

To become a thankful servant to Allah, one should show his or her gratefulness to Allah through his or her (1) heart, (2) tongue and

(3) all physical powers. Let us learn about these three interrelated types of thankfulness in some details.



1. **Shukr-ul-Qalb, or thankfulness felt in the heart**. This is the most important type of thankfulness a Muslim should always experience. One time Prophet Musa spoke to Allah and said, "O Allah how can I thank you when I know that if I worship you all the time would not pay you back for only my eye sight!" Then Allah revealed to him "These thankful feelings in your heart are enough for me." Grateful inner feelings, then, are much appreciated by Allah.

2. **Shukr-ul-Lisan, or thankfulness expressed by the tongue**. A thankful person often expresses his or her gratefulness to his Creator for all His favors. Allah says in Surat-ud-Duha,

﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ﴾

"And [acknowledge] and announce the favor of your Lord." [93:11]

A thankful Muslim always praises Allah and expresses his gratefulness to Allah during his prayers, du'aa', and verbal communications with others. It is important to remember that the first ayah in the Qur'an, after the Basmalah,

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

"All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds." [Surat-ul-Fatihah 1:2]

Imam Ibn Katheer commented that denying the favors of Allah means hiding his grants and/or relating them to others than Allah.

3. **Shukr-ul-Jawarih, or Thankfulness expressed by the body and the limbs**. This is the characteristic of the true believer. He or she always demonstrates his or her gratefulness through worship, loyalty and readiness to serve Allah and His faith. Thankfulness to God can take many forms including, but not limited to:

a. **Prayer, fasting, charity, Hajj, Omrah, and other types of Ibadah, or worship**. These rituals are physical expressions of offering gratitude to Allah. Rasoolullah ﷺ used to stand up long nights in Qiyam-ul-layl every night to the extent his feet swelled. A'ishah (ra) asked him, "Why do you do this when Allah has already forgiven you everything before and everything after?" He said:

أَفَلَا أَكُونُ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا

"Then shall I not be a grateful 'servant?'"

b. **Sujood-us-Shukr, or the Prostration of Thankfulness**. This is a special Islamic ritual of showing gratitude to Allah. When the servant receives a blessing from Allah, or when Allah saves him from a disaster, he should simply fall in prostration thanking Allah for His favors. Rasoolullah used to prostrate to Allah whenever he received a pleasant thing or was told good news. This prostration, which is called Sujood-ush-Shukr, is conducted for the sole purpose of giving thanks to Allah, the Granter of favors and blessings that the servant received.

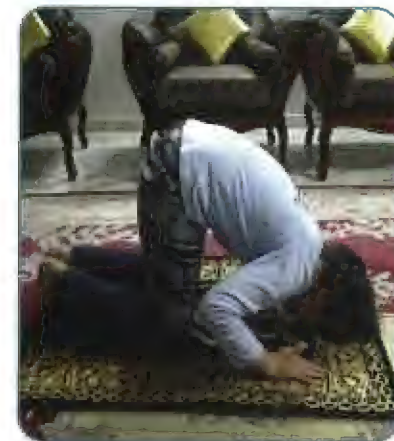
Abdur-Rahman ibn 'Auf (R) narrated that Rasoolullah went out once and he followed him until he entered a grove of palm trees where he prostrated. His prostration was so long that 'Abdur-Rahman feared that Allah had taken his soul. 'Abdur-Rahman came to look at him and he raised his head and said: "What is wrong, Abdur-Rahman?" The Prophet said: "Gibreel came to me and said: 'Shall I not give you good news? Allah says to you, 'Whoever prays upon you, I pray upon him. Whoever salutes you, I salute him.' Therefore, I prostrated to Allah in thanks." [Reported by Ahmad and Al-Haakim]

How to pray Sujood-ush-shukr?

1. Say "Allahu Akbar" while standing then make Sujood on the floor.



2. During Sujood say "Subhana Rabiyaal-A'la" three times and then praise Allah, and thank Him for His favor.



3. Say "Allahu Akbar," and raise your back to a sitting position.



Note: There is no need to make salam to the right and the left like in regular prayer.

c. Helping other people. Helping those in need of our help is an important good deed and way to thank Allah for His favors. Allah likes the people who are helpful to His servants, thus He will continue to shower them with His blessings. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said,

"As the grants from Allah to a servant increase, so will the people's needs. If the servant ignores their needs, it will cause Allah's grants to him to be removed." [Reported by Ibn Hibban].

The Prophet ﷺ also said, "If anyone strokes an orphan's head, doing so only for Allah's sake, he will have blessings for every

hair over which his hand passes; and if anyone treats well an orphan girl or boy under his care, he and I shall be like these two in Paradise," putting two of his fingers together." [Reported by At-Tirmithi].

In conclusion, thanksgiving is not only a particular religious act or service; it is the whole life. The whole life should be lived in obedience to our Ultimate Benefactor, Allah. He created us and He has been good to us. Therefore, in our thankfulness we should always acknowledge His great favors, express our gratefulness to Him, and worship and serve Him.



Du'aa'

اللهم أعني على ذكرك وشكرك وحسن عبادتك

Mu'ath Ibn Jabal narrated that Rasoolullah once said to me "O Mu'ath, I love you. Let me teach you something.. (the duah at end of salah) Allahumma a'innee ala thikrika, wa shukruka, wa hussni ibadatik..

(O Allah help me to remember You, to show gratefulness to You, and to worship You well.) [Reported by Abu Dawood and An-Nasa'ee]

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Create a poster showing the three types of thankfulness to God.
2. Create a Power Point or Flash presentation or a video that shows how to perform Sujood-ush-Shukr.



Stretch Your Mind

1. How does gratefulness to Allah effect your behavior toward others.
2. From ayaat 1-18 of Surat-un-Nahl, infer the different favors and gifts that Allah granted mankind.



Study Questions

- 1 Explain the principle of shukr in Islam.
- 2 Define ni'mah, Shukr-ul-Qalb, shukr-ul-Lisan, Shukr-ul-Jawarih.
- 3 What are the three types of Shukr?
- 4 Explain how a Muslim should practice gratefulness to Allah by his or her heart.
- 5 Explain how a Muslim should practice gratefulness to Allah by his or her tongue.
- 6 Explain how a Muslim should practice gratefulness to Allah by his or her body.
- 7 Write a du'aa' you can say, in Arabic and English, praying to Allah to help you thank him.
- 8 Describe how one can perform Sujood-ush-Shukr.



UNIT B

Portraits of Faith

Chapter One

Two Martyrs: The Stories of

B4

Prophets Zakariyya and Yahya

Chapter Two

Purity of Faith: The Story of Maryam

B14

Chapter Three

The Miracle of Miracles:

B24

the Story of Prophet Isa

Portraits of Faith

Introduction

The people who practice Judaism are traditionally known by several terms, such as Jews or the Children of Israel. Prophet Ya'qoob, whose father was Is'haaq and grandfather was Ibraheem, was also called by the name Israel. His offspring, or descendants, are therefore the 'Children of Israel,' which is how the Qur'an refers to them.

Allah blessed the Children of Israel with many prophets and messengers in the Holy Land and surrounding areas. During their early history, they were devout to God and generally obedient to their prophets. When they began to drift away from Tawheed and worship, Allah blessed them with great prophets like Yousuf (Joseph), Musa (Moses), Harun (Aaron), Dawood (David), Suleyman (Solomon) and many other prophets and messengers.

One major messenger of the Children of Israel was Prophet Musa, or Moses whom Allah gave a divine revelation called At-Tawrah, or Torah. Historically, the Children of Israel encountered many difficulties and problems. They also fell in different forms of disobedience, disbelief and collective sin. Among these disobediences were their disobedience of their prophets and sometimes rejecting and even killing them.

Nations around the Holy Land were tempted to control this important region. Jeusalem, the hub of many prophets and mes-

sengers, was destroyed a few times by Roman and Persian forces. Among the losses were the Temple built by Suleyman, or Solomon, and religious manuscripts, including the Torah. Israelite priests, including Ezra around 400 B.C, tried to reconstruct the lost parts of the Torah on their own and from their collective memory. This caused many inaccuracies, corruption and loss to take place in the man-made manuscripts of the Torah.

Many of the Israelite priests also drifted away from their religious teachings and spiritual ideals. They became keen for worldly desires and temptations. Israelite prophets and sincere priests could not stop the spiritual deterioration in their nation. Among the last of the Israelite religious leaders were Zakariyya (Zachariah), Yahya (John), 'Imran, Maryam (Merriam, or Mary) and 'Isa (Jesus Christ) who was the last of all Israelite messengers. God made him as an extraordinary miracle to inspire the Israelites and other nations to return to the straight path.

In this unit you will learn about the latest Israelite prophets and religious personalities, including the magnificent stories of Virgin Mary and her miraculous son, Prophet 'Isa, (Jesus Christ).

UNIT B CHAPTER ONE

Two Martyrs: The Stories of Prophets Zakariyya and Yahya

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Learn about Prophets Zakariyya and Yahya.
- 2 Appreciate the faithfulness and piety of both of the prophets.
- 3 Briefly learn the relation between Prophets Zakariyya, Yahya and 'Isa عليه السلام.
- 4 Appreciate the sacrifices prophets offer for the sake of Allah.
- 5 Learn and memorize ayaat 1-15 of Surat Maryam.

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER

Zakariyya زكريا

Yahya يحيى

Zakariyya عليه السلام and Yahya عليه السلام were great prophets sent to the Children of Israel. Zakariyya was a righteous servant of Allah تعالى in a time and place where most of his people had forgotten the teachings of God and were interested in pursuing worldly pleasures. He prayed for a righteous son that would continue to spread the message of Allah سبحانه وتعالى amongst the Children of Israel. His son Yahya عليه السلام and 'Isa عليه السلام, who were cousins, faced harsh treatment from their people. However they held fast to the rope of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and continued working to spread the Truth despite trials and tribulations.

To Zakariyya, in his old age, was born
A son Yahya, amid prodigies:
Yahya was the herald of Jesus
and was known
As John the Baptist.

Who was Zakariyya?

Zakariyya عليه السلام was one of the many great prophets who came to the Children of Israel. He worked to earn his living, and he also served as a priest to Allah SWT in the temple at Jerusalem. He was among many other members of his family that worshipped and worked as a priest in the temple as well.

Zakariyya was saddened that many priests of his time served in the temple for power and praise. They no longer held the true spirit of sincerity to serve God and the people. Zakariyya was determined to remain faithful to Allah and sincerely serve his message. His fellow priests found his values and principles to be rigid, as they thought that his way gave no worldly benefit.

Zakariyya and Maryam

Zakariyya, as you will learn with more details in the next chapter, used to watch over Maryam عليه السلام, the future mother of Jesus Christ, or Prophet 'Isa (Jesus Christ). Maryam was a relative of Zakariyya's wife and she grew up under Allah's سبحانه وتعالى special protection. A daughter of pious parents, she عليه السلام used to spend much time worshipping alone at the temple under Zakariyya's spiritual supervision. Her sustenance and food were given to her from Allah (SWT) and indeed her growth was a "goodly growth."

When Zakariyya entered her chamber, he would find her with sufficient food and fruit that were out of season. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran,

"He said: 'O Maryam! Whence (comes) this to you?'"

She said: "From Allah; for Allah provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure." [3:37]

Although Zakariyya was very old, he wished that he would be blessed with a righteous offspring just like Maryam.

A Father's Prayer

Zakariyya عليه السلام and his wife Elizabeth were devout, grateful, patient, and keen in serving their Lord and the people. Zakariyya عليه السلام was very old, and his wife was elderly as well, and barren. Now that he had reached old age, he was worried that there would be no one to continue spreading Allah's religion and practicing it. Thus, he desired to have a child of his own for spiritual reasons. He wanted to have a devout offspring who would be a sincere and faithful servant of Allah and pious community leader. Since he was the prophet to the Children of Israel at that time, he thought that such faithful personality would not develop within his community unless he raised and trained him.

Zakariyya's was encouraged that if Allah سبحانه وتعالى could provide Maryam with special sustenance, then He might also bless them with a child even in old age. His Tawakkul, or sincere reliance on Allah and his faith was extremely strong. Therefore, Prophet Zakariyya عليه السلام turned to his Lord, praying for righteous offspring:

A Prayer Answered

Allah knows what is in the hearts of men and women. While Zakariyya was standing in prayer, the angels called unto him:

سورة مريم

Surat Maryam 1-6

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

كَهَيِّعَصَ ① ذَكَرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا ② إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا ③
 قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ
 شَقِيًّا ④ وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ
 لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ⑤ يَرِثُنِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ وَاجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ⑥

Understood Meaning

- {1} Kaf Ha Ya Ain Suad.
 {2} A mention of the mercy of your Lord to His servant Zakariyya.
 {3} When he called upon his Lord in a low voice,
 {4} "O my Lord! My bones became frail, and t my head is covered with grey hair: but I never failed
 as long as I pray to you!"
 {5} Now I fear what my relatives [and colleagues will do] after me: but my wife is barren: so give
 me an heir,
 {6} [One that] will [truly] represent me, and represent the family of Jacob; and make him, my
 Lord, please You.

سورة مريم

Surat Maryam 7-11

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَنْزَكِرُنَا إِنَّا تَبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ⑦ قَالَ
 رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا ⑧
 قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَى هَيْنٍ وَقَدْ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا ⑨
 قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ⑩
 فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْ سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ⑪

Understood Meaning

{7} O Zakariyya! surely We give you good news of a boy whose name shall be Yahya: We have not made before anyone his equal.

Zakariyya's du'aa' had been answered, but he was still in awe and surprise.

{8} He said: O my Lord! when shall I have a son, and my wife is barren, and I myself have reached indeed the extreme degree of old age?

{9} [God] said: So shall it be, your Lord says: It is easy to Me, and indeed I created you before, when you were nothing.

Zakariyya عليه السلام was elated and wanted to be sure:

{10} He said: My Lord! give me a sign. He said: Your sign is that you will not be able to speak to the people three nights while in sound health.

{11} So he went forth to his people from his place of worship, then he made known to them that they should glorify (Allah) morning and evening.

Zakariyya عليه السلام came out to his people from his chamber, and told them by signs to celebrate Allah's praises in the morning and in the evening. Zakariyya عليه السلام was a very grateful servant, as Allah سبحانه وتعالى had shown him mercy through accepting his Du'aa'. Allah bestowed on him a righteous son and blessed their family.

Yahya, The Righteous Son

God answered Zakariyya's عليه السلام prayers and bestowed him with a son, Yahya عليه السلام, or John who was wise, kind, obedient, and not rebellious.

We know that Yahya's عليه السلام mother was related to Maryam (P). Because Maryam was 'Isa's mother, Yahya عليه السلام and 'Isa عليه السلام were cousins by blood and spiritual brothers in task. Zakariyya, his wife Elizabeth, Maryam and her parents were all descendants of a priestly family. Their lineage goes back to Aaron, the brother of Musa and son of Imran.

Men of God show their qualities
In their private relationship as much
As in their public ministry. Zakariyya
Was anxious, in a world of unrighteous-
ness,

To find a successor to continue his godly
Errand. He was given a son, Yahya,
Who heralded Jesus, and lived a life
Of wisdom, gentle love, and purity.

Allah's Grace

Allah سبحانه وتعالى chose Yahya as another messenger to the Children of Israel, like his father prophet Zakariyya. Upon blessing him with Prophethood, Allah ordered Yahya to hold to his message with all his power. This means that Allah wanted him to learn His guidance in a profound manner and practice it very thoroughly. Allah says in Surat Maryam:

سورة مريم

Surat Maryam 12-15

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يُنَجِّى خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ۝۱۲
وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا ۝۱۳ وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا ۝۱۴
وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ
يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ۝۱۵

Understood Meaning

{12} O Yahya! Take hold of the Book with strength, and We granted him wisdom while he was yet a child.

{13} And [he got] tenderness from Us and purity, and he was pious,

{14} And dutiful to his parents, and he was not rude, disobedient.

{15} And peace on him on the day he was born, and on the day he dies, and on the day he is raised to life

Yahya's Mission and Teachings

Imam Ahmad, on the authority of Al-Harith Al-Ash'ari, narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Allah ordered Yahya عليه السلام the son of Zakariyya with five commands, and to proclaim and establish these commands amongst the Children of Israel without delay. Therefore Yahya عليه السلام gathered the Children of Israel in the Temple of Bayt Al-Maqdis, and sat down on a high place. After praising God and thanking Him for His Grace, he said: "Allah Almighty ordered me to observe five commands, and to proclaim and establish these commands amongst you: (1) Worship Allah and worship none along with Him. (2) Offer prayers. (3) Observe Fasting. (4) Give Charity. (5) Continue your remembrance of Allah Almighty in your daily life.

God created you and provided for you and sustained you. So, worship Him and do not associate partners with Him. And I order you to worship Allah ﷻ, because the worshipper becomes closer to Allah ﷻ when he prays to Him. I forbid you from turning away from Him. Fasting has been ordained for you; indeed the fasting person is like a jar of musk from which all the people passing by can benefit from the beautiful aroma.

Give charity, for indeed it is like the prisoner who has been captured and ready to be executed, then asks his captor, "May I ransom myself?" Then he spends his own money to save his own neck. You must always remember Allah ﷻ in your daily affairs, as the one who is in constant remembrance of Allah ﷻ is like the man who is being chased by an enemy; after a tiring journey the man finds a fortress and seeks protection and security within it; indeed Thikr, or remembrance of Allah ﷻ is one's fortress from Satan."

Incredible Piety

Even in his young life, Prophet Yahya was granted the following gifts:

- (1) Wisdom and knowledge
- (2) Empathy and love for all God's creatures
- (3) Humility in his manners and his clothing and possessions, as he despised luxury and
- (4) Piety.

Additional to the above qualities, Prophet Yahya was very active in serving Allah ﷻ, particularly during his youth. These characteristics in his personality were demonstrated through his conduct, as he loved God and loved God's creatures. He never used violence, nor did he ever mistreat any other human being or creature. He was particularly kind and merciful with his parents, always obedient to them.

"So peace on him the day he was born, the day that he dies, and the day that he will be raised up to life (again)! [19:15]

This ayah refers to the life of Yahya عليه السلام. Peace and blessings from Allah ﷻ were bestowed upon his birth, his life, at his unjust death at the hands of a tyrant, and most importantly on the Day of Judgment.

Prophet Yahya عليه السلام used to stay away from the people because he loved to worship his Creator in solitude. He renounced the world and lived in the wilderness, until his family finally came once looking for him because they missed his presence. They found him near the Jordan River, worshipping Allah ﷻ. His parents cried tears of joy out of happiness that their son was a righteous and obedient young man that loved and feared Allah ﷻ.



Bethlehem: Church of the Nativity: built over the cave where Jesus was born: one of oldest churches in Christendom, from 4th century.

Spiritual Brothers

Yahya عليه السلام was the forerunner of 'Isa عليه السلام. Just as his father had hoped, both Yahya and 'Isa served as Prophets of Allah ﷻ and renewed the belief and message of Allah ﷻ amongst the Children of Israel.

Yahya عليه السلام and 'Isa عليه السلام were sent to the same group of people and had a lot in common. They were brothers in spirit and were given complementary tasks as prophets of Allah ﷻ. Yahya عليه السلام held fast to the teachings of Allah ﷻ in a world which had not only forgotten these teachings, but had also turned to evil and corruption in order to reap benefit. The greatness of Yahya عليه السلام was that he kept hold of God's teachings with all his might, not allowing any worldly affairs to distract him.

Yahya عليه السلام prepared the way for 'Isa عليه السلام, who came to renew and re-interpret the Torah. From the outset, 'Isa عليه السلام declared that he was the servant of God, thus negating the false notion that he was God or the son of God. Both 'Isa عليه السلام and Yahya عليه السلام shared the same devotion to the five commands that Allah ﷻ ordered them to propagate amongst the people.



Yahya's Untimely Death

Yahya عليه السلام did not live long. He was imprisoned by Herod the Tetrarch, the provincial ruler under the Roman Empire. One time Yahya scolded Herod for his sins and corruption. Eventually Yahya عليه السلام was beheaded when Herod's mistress instigated him to kill the great Prophet.

It is said that Herod wanted once to marry his niece Herodias because she was very pretty. He then wanted to get the approval of Prophet Yahya because marrying the niece was prohibited in Judaism. The Prophet refused to approve a marriage that Allah has prohibited. He also gave a speech to the people in which he declared that it a great sin and an incest crime for anyone to marry his niece who was also before the wife of his half brother Philip and this marriage was prohibited in hebrew law.

Herod's niece was an evil woman. She convinced the king to kill Prophet Yahya to clear the way to marry her uncle. The arro-

gant king sent his soldiers to kill Prophet Yahya who was worshipping in the temple. Unfortunately, the evil soldiers viciously killed the Prophet while in prayer.

Shortly after the killing of Prophet Yahya, the same evil group killed Prophet Zakariyya too. Prophet Muhammad described the two Martyred prophets as "the Martyr, and the son of the Martyr."



Yahya Tomb in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus

FAITH IN ACTION



- ★ Yahya عليه السلام was someone that did not 'go with the flow'. He decided to obey Allah سبحانه وتعالى even though the people treated him harshly because of it. As young people in today's world, many times we must choose to ignore 'the flow' in order to make the right choices. Next time you find it difficult to make the right decision, remember Yahya!

- ★ You can also make this du'aa' in times of hardship:

حسبي الله لا إله إلا هو. عليه توكلت وهو رب العرش العظيم.

Hasbiyal-laho-la-ilaha-illaho. Alayhi tawakalto wa howa Rabbol arshil adheem.

God suffices me. There is no God but He: On Him is my trust; He is the Lord of the Throne, Supreme!

CHAPTER REVIEW



Projects and Activities

1. Did you notice that many of the Prophets mentioned in this lesson were related to each other through kin? Make a family tree outlining how the Prophets we have learned about were related through ancestry or kin.
2. You read that Zakariyya عليه السلام was a Prophet and priest in the temple, and that many of the other priests no longer served Allah سبحانه وتعالى alone. Try doing some research on the internet to find out more on the beliefs and practices of the people during the time of Zakariyya عليه السلام, Yahya عليه السلام, and 'Isa عليه السلام. Which other civilizations were present at that time?

Stretch Your Mind



1. We read in the story of Zakariyya عليه السلام that though he was a priest along with other priests in the temple, Zakariyya عليه السلام served for the sake of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and the others did not. Even though many of their actions might have looked the same, their intentions were very different. Zakariyya عليه السلام had faith that Allah سبحانه وتعالى could make the humanly impossible, possible. How does a sincere intention change the outcome of one's actions in this life and the next?
2. Prophet Zakariyya took care of his wife's niece Maryam while Herod the Tetrarch had a certain relationship with his niece. Draw lessons on the differences between the two stories.

Study Questions

- 1 What did Zakariyya عليه السلام pray for in his old age and why?
- 2 Describe Maryam عليها السلام and the miracles she experienced. How was she an encouragement for Zakariyya عليه السلام?
- 3 Why was Zakariyya عليه السلام given a sign to show the people of the miracle he experienced?
- 4 What were the five commands that Yahya عليه السلام was ordered to propagate?
- 5 What are the qualities that Yahya عليه السلام is best known for?
- 6 Describe how Yahya عليه السلام was killed. What does the Qur'an say about Yahya's death?

UNIT

B

CHAPTER

TWO

Purity of Faith: The Story of Maryam

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Learn the story of Maryam and admire her great personality.
- 2 Understand why Maryam was the greatest woman of all times.
- 3 Learn the events that led to the birth of Prophet 'Isa.
- 4 Appreciate the great miracle of the birth of 'Isa for a mother without a husband.
- 5 Appreciate the value and the benefits of purity, devotion and worship that were demonstrated by Maryam and her mother.
- 6 Learn and memorize ayaat 16-22 of Surat Maryam.
- 7 Learn and memorize the Hadeeth about the best women of all times.

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER

Maryam مَرْيَمُ

Imran عِمْرَانُ

Hannah حَنَّة

Zakariyya زَكَرِيَّا

Yahya يَحْيَى

Next comes the story of Jesus and his mother Mary. She gave birth, as a virgin, to Jesus. But her people slandered and abused her. As a disgrace to her lineage. Her son. Was a servant of God, a true Prophet. Blessed in the gifts of Prayer and Charity. But no more than a man: to call him "The son of God" is to derogate from God's Majesty, for God is High above all His Creatures, the Judge of the Last Day.

Introduction

Imran عليه السلام was a righteous man who served of Allah سبحانه وتعالى among the Children of Israel. His people were disobedient to Allah سبحانه وتعالى, thus he and his wife Hannah desired to have a child that would continue to do Allah's سبحانه وتعالى work. They were blessed with a pious daughter Maryam عليها السلام, who was destined to be the mother of the holy Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام. Muslims believe that 'Isa عليه السلام was not crucified, but that he was taken up to the Heavens, and will return before the end of time.

The Chosen Ones

Allah say in Surat Al-Imran,

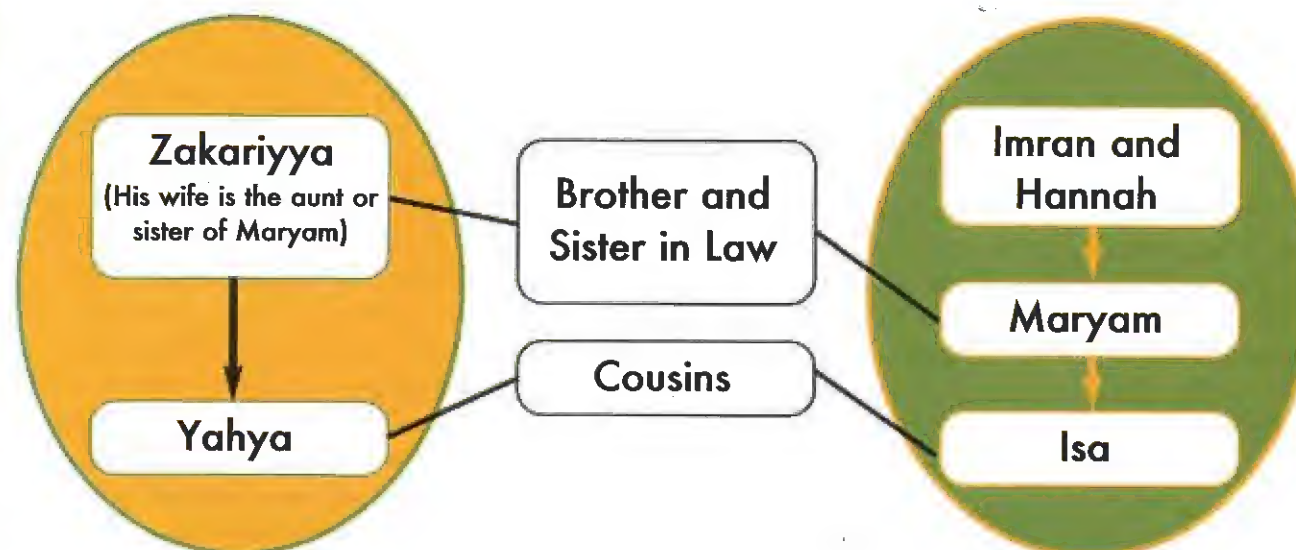
﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

"Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of 'Imran above all people * Offspring, one of the other: and Allah hears and knows all things." Surat Al-Imran [33: 34]

All prophets and messengers come from the same family tree of Adam, Nuh, Ibraheem and Imran that are mentioned in the ayah above. However, all women and men who love and obey Allah سبحانه وتعالى and His Messengers are all part of the same spiritual family.

The Birth of Maryam

Maryam, the daughter of 'Imran, came from a priestly family from the lineage of Prophet Dawood عليه السلام. We know that Maryam, the mother of Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام, was a relative of Prophet Yahya's عليه السلام mother. Therefore, Yahya عليه السلام and 'Isa عليه السلام were cousins by blood. They were also spiritual brothers as prophets and, in their efforts to obey Allah سبحانه وتعالى and spread the truth.





In Aramaic language the name Maryam means "Servant of God."

Blessed Seed

'Imran, Maryam's father, was an Imam (Priest) for the Children of Israel in Bayt-ul-Maqdis. His wife, Hannah, was a very dedicated worshipper of God. She dedicated her unborn child to serve as an imam, or a priest, to the serve God in Bayt-ul-Maqdis. Though she was in old age, she prayed to Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} for a child who would also devote his efforts to worshipping Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} and serving His house like what her husband Imran used to do.

Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} in His infinite wisdom gave her a blessed and miraculous daughter instead, and portrayed how a daughter could be a pious and conscientious servant of Him ^{سبحانه وتعالى} as well.

Maryam ^{عليها السلام} is Born

Hannah was surprised to give birth to a daughter because all the priests of that time were male. Was she disappointed that she was given a female child? Not at all, because she had a strong faith that Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} is the best of planners. Her daughter Maryam ^{عليها السلام} was not an ordinary girl; she was chosen amongst all women to not only be the mother of Prophet 'Isa ^{عليه السلام}, but to be a devout worshipper herself. As a young woman she used to spend long periods of time in the temple praying to Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى}

and experiencing miracles.

Under Musa's law, the female child could not be devoted to temple service as Maryam's mother intended. However, Hannah asked for God's protection for her against all evil and was determined that her daughter would be a servant of Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى}.

Mary's Guardian

Hannah took Maryam to the Temple of Bayt-ul-Maqdis, where she hoped that Maryam ^{عليها السلام} would grow and be trained to serve God. The priests disputed amongst themselves as to which one of them would be her guardian. They all considered it a privilege to take care of the Imran's daughter.

Zakariyya ^{عليه السلام} was a Prophet sent to the Children of Israel and was Maryam's ^{عليها السلام} relative. Yet, other men challenged his authority in both religion and the right to care for Maryam ^{عليها السلام}. Eventually, they decided to cast lots with pens, in order to determine who would take up this responsibility. They drew lots by throwing their pens into the Jordan River. The rule was that the pen that goes against the flow of the river and stays still should win. All of pens flowed downstream except for Zakariyya's ^{عليه السلام} pen, which stood stationary against the stream. They repeated the draw three times and ended up with the same result. Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} had planned that Zakariyya ^{عليه السلام}, a pious prophet, would be the guardian of Maryam ^{عليها السلام}.



Bayt-ul-Maqdis - The city of Jerusalem.

Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} says in Surat Al-Imran:

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذَرَيْتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَمْرُؤُا أَنَّىٰ لَكَ هَٰذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

Behold! The wife of 'Imran said: "O my Lord! I do dedicate to you what is in my womb for your special service: So accept this of me: For you are the All-Hearing and All-Knowing all things."

When she was delivered, she said: "O my Lord! Behold! I am delivered of a female child!" - and Allah knew best what she brought forth-

"And the male is not like the female. I have named her Maryam, and I commend her and her offspring to your protection from Satan, the Rejected."

Right graciously did her Lord accept her: He made her grow in purity and beauty: To the care of Zakariyya was she assigned. Every time that he entered (Her) chamber to see her, He found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Mary! Whence (comes) this to you?" She said: "From Allah. for Allah provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure." Surat Al-Imran [3:35-37]

Maryam grew up under God's special protection. Her sustenance, including both her spiritual and physical needs came from God, and her growth was indeed a "blessed growth." She sought the support and protection of God alone, and no one else.

Historians state that Zakariyya assigned a special private chamber for her on the eastern side of the temple. He screened her chamber

from the people, so that no one could enter it except for him, in order to give her safety and privacy. She used to worship Allah سبحانه وتعالى night and day and serve in the temple as well.

Common knowledge says that Prophet Zakariyya became very old, so he asked Maryam's cousin, Joseph the carpenter, to take care of her. Joseph was a very pious man and accepted this blessed responsibility.

Chosen Woman and Son

Over the years, Maryam became a rare example of devotion and worship unparalleled amongst the Children of Israel. There was not a single other person equal to her in her 'ibadah, or worship, and prolonged prayers. She was constantly in a state of 'itikaf, or ritual seclusion, in Bayt Al-Maqdis, not leaving the temple except for urgent necessities. She used to stand in prayer for long times until her feet were swollen.

Allah was very pleased with Maryam's worship and devotion. Upon orders from Allah, the angels came down to deliver a special message to Maryam.

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَكَةُ يَمْرُومُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ يَمْرُومُ أَفَتُنْكِي لِرَبِّكِ وَأَسْجُدِي وَأَرْكَبِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

(42) Behold! the angels said: "O Mary! Allah has chosen you and purified you- chosen you above the women of all nations. (43) O Mary! worship Your Lord devoutly: Prostrate yourself, and bow down (in prayer) with those who bow down." Surat Al-Imran [3:42-43]

In these verses Allah mentions that the angels gave glad tidings to Maryam عليها السلام that Allah had chosen her from among all women of all nations. To her, He would bestow upon her a unique miracle! She would have a son with no father, and indeed he would be an honorable prophet. He would speak from his cradle in his childhood and call the people to Allah سبحانه وتعالى in his youth.

﴿إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَكَةُ يَمْرُومُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ﴾ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Behold! the angels said: "O Mary! Allah gives you glad tidings of a Word from Him: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Maryam, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah. He shall speak to the people in cradle and in maturity. And he shall be (of the company) of the righteous." Surat Al-Imran[3:45-46]

The Holy Spirit Jibreel Meets Maryam عليها السلام

The Angel Jibreel عليه السلام is described in Al-Qur'an as Ar-Rooh-ul-Qudus, or the Holy Spirit. He appeared to Maryam عليها السلام one day in her chamber in the shape of a man. No man ever entered her chamber except for Zakariyya عليه السلام, so she became very frightened. Extremely worried, she sought refuge and protection from Allah سبحانه وتعالى and told the man not to come near her.

Indeed it was an angel, not a man, who had come to convey to her a message from Allah سبحانه وتعالى.

سورة مريم

Surat Maryam 16-22

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ﴿١٦﴾ فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتُ نَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكْ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَى هَيْنٍ وَلَنَجْعَلَ لَهٗ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾ فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

Understood Meaning

{16} Relate in the Book (the story of) Mary, when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East. {17} She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We sent her our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects. {18} She said: "I seek refuge from you to (Allah) Most Gracious: (come not near) if you dost fear Allah."

{19} "He [Jibreel] said: "Nay, I am only a messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a holy son."

Surprised, Maryam عليها السلام replied:

{20} She said: "How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?

{21} He said: "So (it will be): Your Lord says, 'that is easy for Me: and (We wish) to appoint him as a sign unto men and a mercy from us': It is a matter (so) decreed." [Surat Maryam 19:20-21]

The Story in the Bible

26. And in the sixth month, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth. 27. To a virgin ... and the virgin's name was Mary. 28. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, you that art highly favored, the Lord is with you: blessed art you among women. 29. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for you hast found favor with God. 31. And, behold, you shalt conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. 34. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35. And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you ... 36. And, behold, your cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.



37. For with God nothing shall be impossible. 38. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word. And the angel departed from her.

Source: Luke 1 (King James Version)

The Immaculate Conception

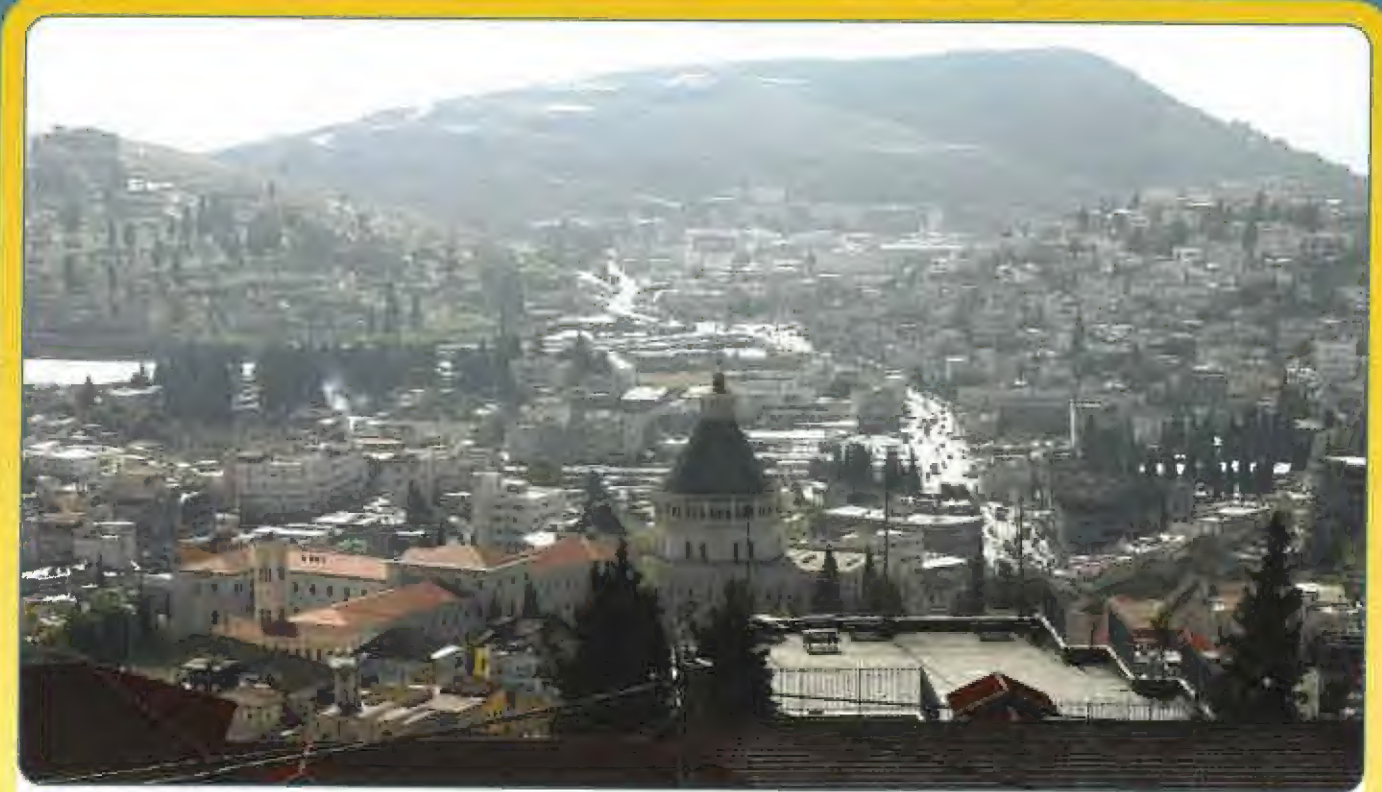
By Allah's power Maryam conceived her son 'Isa miraculously without a husband. Despite all challenges she submitted to the will of Allah. When she felt the pains of birth giving, she retired to a remote place.

"And (remember) her, who guarded her chastity: We breathed into her of Our spirit, and We made her and her son a sign for all peoples." [21:91]

Historians say that Angel Jibreel breathed onto Maryam. That miraculous breath caused her to become pregnant and conceive her blessed baby. Maryam عليها السلام was but a human, therefore, she suffered the pangs of an expectant mother with no one to help her. She could not ask anyone to help her as no

one would believe that she was bearing a child without a father! She was in a great pain, both physically and emotionally. The pangs of childbirth were hard on her, as well as the gossip of the people in her area. They started to accuse her of committing the great shame of fornication.

This is just part of the story of one of the most righteous woman of all time; Maryam. Her life was devoted to serving Allah. Allah protected her from the people and helped her through many hardships. He performed a great miracle by giving Maryam a son without a husband and that blessed son became a great prophet. May peace and blessings be showered upon Maryam for all her righteous deeds.



The city of Nazareth (Galilee).



Hadeeth Shareef

عن ابن عباس قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه السلام:
(أفضل نساء أهل الجنة خديجة بنت خويلد وفاطمة بنت محمد
ومريم بنت عمران وآسية بنت مزاحم امرأة فرعون)
رواه النسائي وابن حبان

Ibn Abbas narrated that Rasoolullah said,
"The best four women in Jannah are Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid, Fatimah bint Muhammad, Maryam bint Imran and Asia bint Muzahim, the wife of Pharoah."

Reported by An-Nasa'ee and Ibn Hibban.



Bethlehem: Entrance to the Church of the Nativity.

FAITH IN ACTION



- ★ Always have strong faith and firm trust in Allah's help and support during difficult situations.
- ★ Worship Allah as much as you can, just like what Maryam used to do.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Recite ayaat of Surat Al-Imran and ayaat of Surat Maryam.
2. Write a poem about Maryam A.S.



Stretch Your Mind



1. What would you do if you were accused of a heinous act that you never did?
2. Why do you think Allah blessed Maryam and selected her from among all women to experience one of a kind miracle and become the mother of Isa عليه السلام?

Study Questions

- 1 Who was: a. Imran b. Hannah c. Maryam
- 2 What was the name of Maryam's mother and father?
- 3 What did Maryam's mother promise to Allah while she was pregnant? And how did Allah respond?
- 4 Who took care of Maryam while she was growing up? And how did he take this responsibility?
- 5 Where did Maryam go when she received the news that Allah was blessing her with a son?
- 6 What was her reaction at first when Angel Jibreel appeared to her?

UNIT

B

CHAPTER

THREE

The Miracle of Miracles: the Story of Prophet 'Isa

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- 1 Learn the story of Prophet 'Isa and admire his great personality.
- 2 Understand why Maryam was the greatest woman of all times.
- 3 Learn the events that led to the birth of Prophet 'Isa
- 4 Appreciate the great miracles of Prophet 'Isa and understand why Allah blessed him with these miracles
- 5 Appreciate the value and the benefits of purity, devotion and worship that was demonstrated by Maryam and her mother.
- 6 Learn and memorize ayaat 23-33 of Surat Maryam.
- 7 Learn and memorize the hadeeth about the closeness between Prophets 'Isa and Muhammad.

VOCABULARY

'Isa عيسى

Al-Maseeh المسيح

Al-Hawariyyoon الحواريون

Prophet 'Isa, or Jesus Christ was one of the greatest prophets Allah ever sent to mankind. He is one of the five messengers who are described in the Qur'an as the messengers of power and determination. These messengers are Ibraheem, Nuh, Musa, 'Isa and Muhammad. In the previous chapter, you have learned about the Virgin Mary, Prophet 'Isa's mother. In this chapter, you will learn about Prophet 'Isa, peace be upon him.

B24

The Birth of 'Isa

Maryam عليها السلام gave birth to 'Isa عليه السلام in Bethlehem, six miles south of Jerusalem in a remote place away from people. Some historians say that Maryam was then fifteen years old. She prayed to Allah سبحانه وتعالى for ease from her pain, and the angel immediately told her to shake the palm tree beside her. Dates dropped on her miraculously, as palm trees do not normally drop dates by the shaking of one person alone. Allah also made a stream of fresh water run by her. Allah says in Surat Maryam,

سورة مريم

Surat Maryam 23-26

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فَاجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جَنْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَلَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًا
مَنْسِيًا ﴿٢٣﴾ فَنَادَتْهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ﴿٢٤﴾ وَهَزَى إِلَيْكِ
جَنْعُ النَّخْلَةِ تَسْقُطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرِينِ مِنَ
الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

Understood Meaning

{23} And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree: " Ah! Would that I had died before this! Would that I had been a thing forgotten and out of sight!" {24} But (a voice) cried to her from beneath the (palm-tree): "Grieve not! for your Lord has provided a stream beneath you; {25} "And shake towards yourself the trunk of the palm-tree: It will let fall fresh ripe dates upon you. {26} "So eat and drink and relax. And if you see anyone, say, 'I have vowed to the Most Gracious to refrain from speaking this day with any human being'"[19: 23-26]

B25

Maryam عليها السلام took comfort in these signs and was pleased and content that Allah was taking good care of بها and her new born. She was under a vow to Allah بأنه that she would not speak to anyone, in order to demonstrate the miracle of Allah بأنه.



Jesus was of virgin birth,
And performed many miracles.
But those to whom he came as Prophet
Rejected him, and plotted for his death.
Their plots failed, for God's Plan
Is above man's plots. So will it be
With Islam, the Truth from all eternity.

THE DATE AND ITS USES AS DESCRIBED IN THE QUR'AN

There is considerable wisdom in dates to Allah recommending Maryam. The date is an excellent choice of food for the pregnant women and for those who have just given birth. As scientists now know Maryam was inspired to understand this point, in order to make her own labour easier. The date has one of the highest sugar levels, 60-65%, of all fruits. Doctors recommend that pregnant women be given foods containing fruit sugar on the day they give birth. The aim behind this is to energize the mother's weakened

body and at the same time to stimulate the milk hormones and increase the levels of mother's milk essential to the new-born baby.

In addition, loss of blood during birth leads to a fall in body sugar levels. Dates are important from the point of view of enabling sugar to enter the body and prevent blood pressure from dropping. Their high calorific value strengthens people weakened by illness or suffering from extreme fatigue.

Dates also contain a form of sugar that gives the body high levels of mobility and heat energy and which can be easily broken down in the body. Furthermore, this sugar is not glucose, which rapidly raises the level of blood sugar, but the fruit sugar fructose. A rapid rise in blood sugar levels in diabetics in particular has a damaging effect on a great many organs and systems, especially the eyes, kidneys, heart and circulatory system and nervous system. High blood sugar is one of the main causes of disorders as serious as loss of sight, heart attacks and kidney insufficiency.

These facts reveal the wisdom in the way that Allah's recommendation Maryam to eat dates. Allah designed dates to energize and invigorate the woman and ensure the emergence of milk, the only food for a baby. For example, besides fruit sugar, the date contains more than ten elements of vital importance if the body is to remain healthy and energetic. Modern-day scientists state that human beings can actually live for years on nothing more than dates and water. Dowson, a recognized expert in this field, says that one piece of date and a glass of milk are enough to meet all of a person's daily nutritional requirements. ("Date and Health," www.sgp-dates.com/date.htm.)

The substance oxytocin, which is present in the date, is used in modern medicine to facilitate birth. In fact, oxytocin means "rapid birth." It is also known to increase levels of mother's milk after birth. (<http://eilat.sci.brooklyn.cuny.edu/newnyc/DRUGS/OXYTOCIN.HTM>)

Oxytocin is actually a hormone released by the pituitary gland which stimulates contractions of the womb during childbirth. All the pre-birth preparations in the body take place thanks to this hormone. The effects of the hormone can be seen in the muscles that form the mother's womb and in cells in the muscular structure that enables the secretion of mother's milk. The effective contraction of



Fresh Dates.

the womb is essential if birth is to take place. Oxytocin enables the muscles that comprise the womb to contract in a very powerful manner. Moreover, oxytocin also initiates the secretion of mother's milk. This feature of the date alone-the way it contains oxytocin-is important evidence that the Qur'an is the revelation of Allah. The medical identification of the benefits of the date only became possible in recent times. Yet it was set out fourteen centuries ago in the Qur'an when Allah revealed to Maryam that she should eat dates.

Dates also contain a great many vitamins and minerals. They are very rich in fiber, fat and proteins.

Source: http://www.miraclesofthequran.com/scientific_69.html



Maryam's Return to Jerusalem

After some time Maryam عليها السلام returned to Jerusalem, carrying her newborn baby in her arms. The town's people were shocked; Allah describes what happened in Surat Maryam,

سورة مريم

Surat Maryam 27-33

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فَآتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ. قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا (٢٧) يَتَأَخَذَ هَدْرُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ أَمْرًا سَوْءًا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا (٢٨) فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نَكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا (٢٩) قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا (٣٠) وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا (٣١) وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا (٣٢) وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا (٣٣)

Understood Meaning

{27} At length she brought the (baby) to her people, carrying him (in her arms). They said: "O Mary! Truly an amazing thing hast thou brought! {28} Oh sister of Aaron! Your father was not an evil man nor was your mother an unchaste woman! {29} But she pointed to the baby. They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?"

The blessed baby 'Isa عليه السلام responded:

{30} "I am indeed a servant of God. He has given me Revelation and made me a prophet. {31} And He had made me blessed wheresoever I be, and has enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live; {32} (He) has made me kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable. {33} So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)!"



According to a previous vow she took, Maryam (AS) did not speak, but instead she pointed to the baby. They looked at her in complete disbelief; how she thought that pointing to her baby could help her now, the

people wondered. But miraculously the child began to speak. He was inspired by Allah صلي الله عليه وسلم, and spoke in defense of his blessed mother and preached the truth to the unbelievers.



Only in the Qur'an

The incident of 'Isa speaking when he was an infant in the cradle was mentioned only the Qur'an. The story is not mentioned in the Bible or in any Christian gospel.

Maryam and 'Isa Move to Egypt

Some historical reports claim that Maryam felt that 'Isa was in danger in Jerusalem. King Herod the Great and other wicked people were a threat on her and her miraculous baby. Therefore, she journeyed to Egypt and stayed there for a number of years. When 'Isa was about thirteen years old, the danger on 'Isa was over. Thus, Maryam returned to the Holy Land and stayed in Nazareth. Therefore, 'Isa spent his adolescent years mainly in that city, where Allah taught him his guidance and prepared him as a great messenger.

Prophet 'Isa's Mission and Teachings

'Isa was brought to the world as a prophet with a beautiful personality and great miracles. When he was thirty years old Allah sent him to inspire his people, the Children of Israel, to return to God. The Children of Israel had fallen astray over time. Isaiah (AS), a major prophet of the Israelites, warned that they had started worshipping other idols, rebelled against Allah, partook in corruption, treachery, oppression, hypocrisy, and murder. They no longer held a respect for life, truth, and justice, and instead cared only for their own worldly benefit at the expense of other people and the salvation of their own souls!

Prophet 'Isa was then sent mainly as a messenger to the Children of Israel. Allah describes Prophet 'Isa's mission in Surat Al-Imran as,

﴿وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ﴾

And [appointed Jesus] a messenger to the Children of Israel, [3:49]

Also, Allah quotes 'Isa's speech to the Children of Israel in Surat-us-Saff,

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ﴾

And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the apostle of Allah (sent) to you." [61:6].

Prophet 'Isa (AS) called his people to Tawheed (the oneness of God), brotherhood, love, and morality in his teachings. He taught his people not to kill, steal, lie, commit adultery, cheat, or disrespect their parents.

Prophets come at times when the level of morality and spirituality are at their lowest within mankind. They come to remind the people of their beliefs and responsibility to Allah. When people are lost within the dark wilderness of a forest, the prophets are like guides with bright torches lighting the way out of the woods.

Jesus Christ was also brought to assure the repentant people of salvation and this is the case with all apostles of God.

The Miracles of Prophet 'Isa

Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام was himself a miracle, being born without a father. However, Allah blessed him with many other miracles to help him convince the Children of Israel of his true message. First, he could speak when he was an infant. Such a great miracle was only mentioned in the Qur'an, and cannot be found in the Bible.

Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام could also cure people with serious handicaps and diseases. Allah enabled him to cure the sick by simply wiping their diseased spots. For that reason he was called Al-Maseeh, or the Messiah, which means in Arabic, among other things, the one who cures people by wiping on them.

In Hebrew language, however, the "Mashiah" means "the anointed."

Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام even raised the dead in certain situations. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ أَذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتَتَّبِعُ الْأَكْمَامَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِن هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

[110] Allah did say: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Remember My favor to you and to your mother. I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit, so that you did speak to the people in cradle and in maturity. Behold! I taught you the Book and

Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel and behold! you make out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My leave, and you breath into it and it becomes a bird by My leave, and you heal those born blind, and the lepers, by My leave. And behold! you bring forth the dead by My leave. And behold! I did restrain the Children of Israel from (violence to) you when you didst show them the clear Signs, and the unbelievers among them said: 'This is nothing but evident magic.' [Surat-ul-Maidah 5:110]

Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام then was a mortal human being who ate, drank, and slept just like all other humans. The miracles he practiced were possible only because Allah تعالى, the source of all miracles, blessed him with these abilities. It was only with God's permission and ability that 'Isa عليه السلام healed the sick and wounded.

The Hawariyyoon: The Disciples of Jesus Christ

Prophet 'Isa exerted great efforts to guide his people to the straight path. Instead of accepting his message, many disbelieved in him and conspired to kill him. At that point Prophet 'Isa wanted to see who was faithful to him. Twelve people declared their loyalty to his message and their willingness to travel with him. These twelve devout people are known as the Disciples, or الحواريون Al-Hawariyyoon as they are called in Al-Qur'an.

﴿فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا بِمَا أُنزِلَتْ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾﴾

"When Jesus found Unbelief on their part He said: "Who will be My helpers to (the work of) Allah?" The disciples said: "We are Allah's helpers: We believe in Allah and you bear witness that we are Muslims." [Surat-ul-Maidah 5:52-53]

One day, the Hawariyyoon, or the disciples of Prophet 'Isa, wanted to confirm their belief in him with yet more miracles. Thus, they requested that Allah would send a banquet from Heaven down for them. This incident was documented in Surat-ul-Ma'idah, or the Banquet.

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ
(١١٢) قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَنَطْمِئِنَّ
قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتُنَا وَعُنَّ عَلَىٰهَا
مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (١١٣) قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ
رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا
عِيدًا لِّآلِئِنَّا وَءَاخِرِنَا وَءَايَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا
وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ (١١٤) قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَرْسُلٌ
عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدَ مَنكُم فَأِنِّي أَعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا
لَّا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ (١١٥)

"Behold! The Disciples said: "O Jesus the son of Mary, can your Lord send down to us a table set (with food) from Heaven?" Said Jesus: * "Fear God, if ye have faith." Therefore, They said: "We only wish to eat thereof and satisfy our hearts, and to know that thou hast indeed told us the truth; and that we ourselves may be witnesses to the miracle." 'Isa (AS) implored God: "O our Lord! Send us from Heaven a table set (with viands), that there may be for us-- for the first and the last of us a solemn festival and a sign from You; and provide for our sustenance, for You art the best sustainer (of our needs)." [Surat-ul-Maidah 5:112-114]

God promised him that banquet on condition that:

"...If any of you after that resisted faith, I will punish him with a penalty such as I have not inflicted on anyone among all people." [Surat-ul-Maidah 5:112-115]

All the disciples stood fast on their faith and loyalty except one as you will learn later.

Jesus did feed his disciples by miracle.
But he claimed no divinity: he was
A true servant of God, to Whom doth belong
The dominion of the Heavens and Earth:
Glory and power are His, and His alone.

Jesus Christ Foretells the Coming of Prophet Muhammad

Prophet 'Isa did not only confirmed the message of Prophet Musa who came before him, also he foretold his people and the world about the coming of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Qur'an confirmed this fact in Surat-us-Saff,

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ
اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا
بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ (٦)

"And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the apostle of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of an Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad." But when he came to them with clear signs, they said, "this is evident sorcery!" [61:6]

Since the Injeel was changed or lost after

Prophet 'Isa, the name of Muhammad does not appear explicitly in the current gospels. However, there are parts of the gospels that hint at the coming of a messenger after Prophet 'Isa. Some Christian religious leaders are fast to contend that such verses do not talk about Prophet Muhammad but refer to a Holy spirit. Here are examples of such verses:

John 16 (King James Version)

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

The Israelite Priests Reject Prophet Isa and Plot to Kill Him

As you learned earlier, some of the Children of Israel truly accepted the truth and followed the guidance of Prophet 'Isa and followed the guidance of Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام. However, the Israelites' priests and many of their people disbelieved in him, rejected his message and accused him of sorcery. They also accused him of trying to change the teachings of Prophet Musa and other Israelite prophets.

The Bible documents the bitterness Prophet 'Isa felt toward his rejecters. In the Gospel of Mathew 23:37, Prophet 'Isa is quoted saying,

37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. 38. Look, your house is left to you desolate.

Mathew 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Historians say that some of Israelite's leaders conspired with the Roman ruler in Jerusalem to kill Prophet 'Isa. They made him believe that Jesus Christ was planning to become the king of the Jews and topple his Roman authority in the Holy Land. The governor ordered that Jesus must come to his court. This meeting is recorded in the Gospel of Mathew as follows:

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. 12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly. 15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. 16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? 18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. 19

When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. 20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. 22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified." [Mathew 11-23]

According to Mathew, then, the Israelite priests rejected 'Isa عليه السلام completely and called for his death. They demanded that the Romans release the robber Barabbas from prison, rather than 'Isa عليه السلام, in order that 'Isa عليه السلام be killed. The Qur'an briefly documents the conspiracy described above. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran,

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ الْمَاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾
إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لَا تَهْبِطُ فِي هَذِهِ الْبِلَادِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ
إِلَى وَمَطْهَرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ
الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَكُمْ فِي مَا
كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

{54} And (the unbelievers) plotted and planned, and Allah too planned, and the best of planners is Allah. {55} Behold! Allah said: "O Jesus! I will take you and raise you to Myself and clear you (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow you superior to those who reject faith, to the Day of Resurrection: Then shall ye all return unto me, and I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute. [Surat Al Imran 3:52-55]

Some of the priests plotted with the Roman governor to kill Jesus. They turned them against 'Isa عليه السلام by falsely accusing him of being a traitor.



FAITH IN ACTION

- ★ Always have much of patience with those who vilify you and make false accusations against you.
- ★ Always refute others' maligning by using short but convincing defense, just like Maryam did. Avoid getting involved in long arguments.

They Tried but Failed: The Story of Crucifixion

The belief in the crucifixion is very prominent among Christians. They believe that Jesus Christ was captured by the Romans and was crucified, or nailed to a cross and left to die. All Christian culture promotes the crucifixion through speeches, books, movies and other means.

Al-Qur'an is clear and firm that Prophet 'Isa was neither crucified nor killed عليه السلام. Instead, Allah سبحانه وتعالى raised Him up to the heavens. Some commentators explain that Judas Iscariot has been made to look like Jesus was the one who got crucified. The man was one of the twelve disciples of Prophet 'Isa, but he later betrayed him for money according to the Gospels. The Gospel of Mark documents the incident in the following manner:

And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests, to betray him to them. Who hearing it were glad; and they promised him they would give him money. (Mark 14:10-1)

Alternative historical interpretations claim that another Jesus of Yeshua, Simon of Gyrene was the one on the cross.

Muslims do not believe in the crucifixion; the truth is that 'Isa عليه السلام ascended to Heaven alive by the will of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and will return again before the Day of Judgment.

"That they said (in boast) we killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of God; * But they killed him not. * Nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only assumption to follow, for of surely they killed him not: * Nay, God raised him up unto Himself; and God is Exalted in Power, Wise and there is none of the People of the Book but must believe in him before his death; And on the Day of Judgment he will be witness against them." [4:157-159]

What does the Qur'an say about Jesus Christ?



- 1 Messenger of Allah 4:171
- 2 Word of Allah 4:171
- 3 Spirit of Allah 4:171
- 4 He is not God 5:119
- 5 He is a sign of the greatness of God 23:50
- 6 Servant of Allah 19:30
- 7 Blessed Prophet 4:171
- 8 Peace will be on him during his life, death and resurrection 19:33
- 9 He came to confirm the Torah
- 10 He foretold the coming of Prophet Muhammad 61:6
- 11 Allah taught him the book, wisdom, Torah and Injeel 3:48
- 12 He was kind to his mother 19:32
- 13 He is a sign of the hour 43:61
- 14 He was ordered to pray to God 19:31
- 15 He was ordered to give charity 19:31

CHAPTER REVIEW

Projects and Activities

1. Recite ayaat of Surat Al-Imran and ayaat of Surat Maryam.
2. Write a poem about Prophet 'Isa A.S
3. Write a 300 word essay proving that Jesus Christ was a great prophet and a human being, not a god.



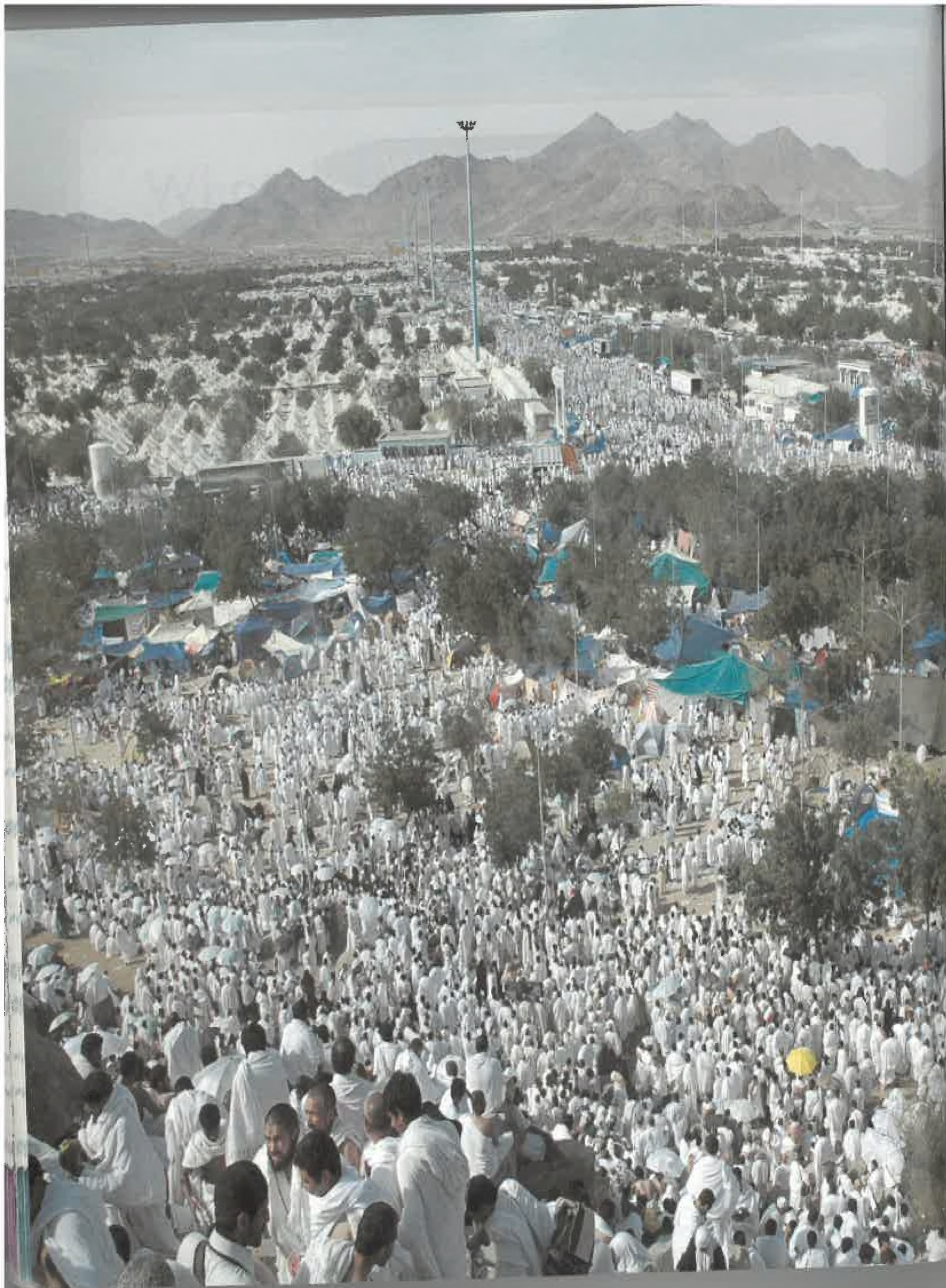
Stretch Your Mind

1. What are the similarities and differences between the creation of Prophets Adam and 'Isa?
2. List three similarities and three differences between the Islamic and Christian views of Jesus?



Study Questions

- 1 Where was Prophet 'Isa born?
- 2 Describe the events that Maryam experienced before delivering her blessed baby?
- 3 How did Maryam answer the people's questions about her baby?
- 4 What are the main miracles Prophet 'Isa came with?
- 5 Why was Prophet 'Isa sent to the Children of Israel?
- 6 What were the most important teachings of Prophet 'Isa?
- 7 Did Prophet 'Isa die? Explain your answer and support it with the appropriate ayaat.
- 8 What is crucifixion? What does the Qur'an say about it?
- 9 Who is Judas Iscariot? Support your answer with a text from the Bible.
- 10 In addition to Christianity, what is the only other major religion that believes in Jesus Christ as a great religious figure.
- 11 What did the people do when they knew about Maryam's birth? And how did she respond?



Beautiful Worship: The Rules of Siyam and Hajj

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